

FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO



Celebrating 36 Years

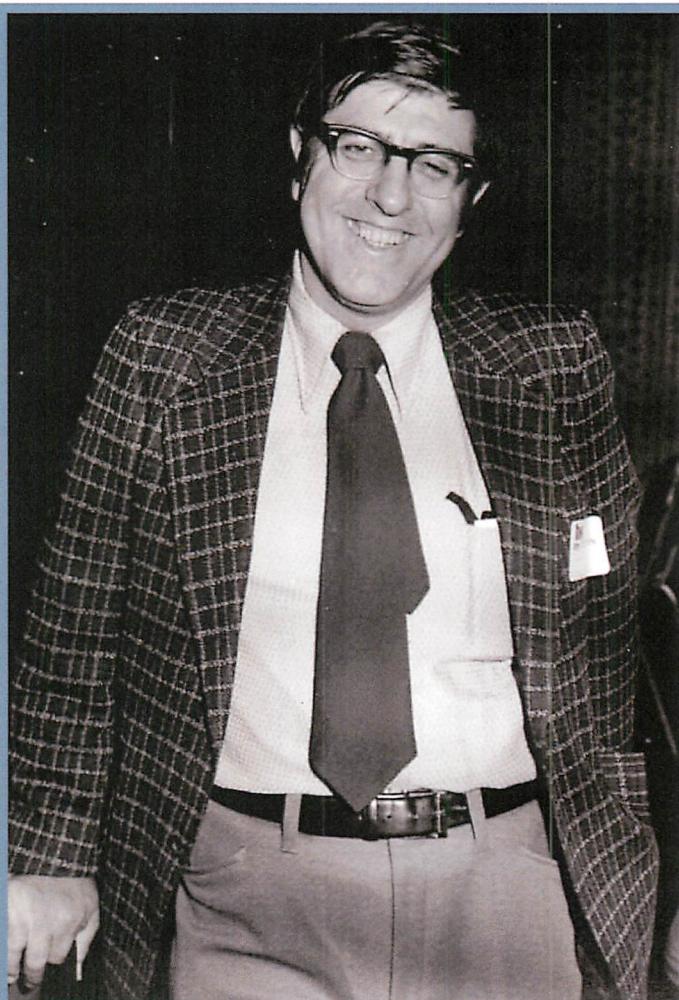


INTRODUCTION

THE FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO was a four-day celebration acknowledging the Golden Age of Radio, featuring live performances and re-creations of classic radio programs with all-star casts, celebrity guests, memorabilia, music and historical presentations. Every day there were afternoon programs and seminars, followed by a buffet dinner and stage performances. For 36 years, this event carved out a time in late October, running from Thursday to Saturday. Over the years, the convention secured appearances from such legends as RUSSELL HORTON, ARCH OBOLER, CARLTON E. MORSE, MARGOT STEVENSON, KEN ROBERTS, CELESTE HOLM, MASON ADAMS, JACKSON BECK, JOHN HART, GORDON GOULD, JERRY STILLER, WILL HUTCHINS, RON LACKMAN, ART GILMORE, GALE STORM, LEONARD MALTIN, BOB MOTT, SOUPY SALES, JOYCE RANDOLPH, FRED FOY, JIMMY LYDON, PAUL PETERSON, ROSEMARY RICE, BOB HASTINGS, ELLIOTT REID, HAL STONE, MICHAEL Gwynne, NOEL NEILL, SIMON JONES, FRANKIE THOMAS, CHUCK McCANN, MICKEY FREEMAN, PEGGY KING, BILL DANA, and many others.



ED HERLIHY



DAVE SIEGEL

"Just as exciting as seeing the special guests perform is meeting them in-person and finding out how many wonderful people were involved in old radio and are willing to share their time to swap stories of favorite shows and actors," recalled Sean Dougherty. "At my first convention I was blown away by finding myself at dinner with Rosemary Rice and Hal Stone. Years later, I had the thrill of introducing my parents to Dick Beals and Arthur Anderson."

Frequent attendees will confirm how they made a number of life-long friends who shared the same enthusiasm for the hobby. Even with the advent of e-mail and the Internet, friends still gathered in Newark, N.J., to shake hands,

exchange hugs and chat about their recent acquisitions. As Barb Davies once remarked, "It's like a family reunion where no one is related."

Paraphrasing Westbrook Van Voorhis from *The March of Time*, as it must come to all things, the Friends of Old Time Radio is coming to an end. Faithful attendees were despondent when they heard that the curtain was falling on their favorite convention, so this commemorative program guide is meant to recognize the celebrities and good times had by all, including those who are no longer with us. Try to remember, while holding back the tears, that this scrapbook was created to cherish the memories.

The idea of a commemorative

guide began with Dave Siegel, who proposed the idea to Jay. From there, the idea came to fruition and what you hold in your hands is a testament to 36 years of the Friends of Old-Time Radio. Invitations to contribute memories and stories from the past 36 years went out to both the committee members and the attendees. Hundreds of e-mails, postings on message boards, Facebook and briefs in newsletters helped compile what you will enjoy reading. While a select few did not have the time to contribute due to their hectic schedules, the editor of this guide would like to thank all of the individuals who took a few moments to share their stories and photographs.

THE FATHER FIGURE OF FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO, JAY HICKERSON, EXPLAINED THAT NOSTALGIC RADIO GET-TOGETHERS WERE HELD IN CONNECTICUT STARTING IN 1971. IT WAS IN 1976 THAT FOTR WAS FORMED. FOR THE FIRST TWO YEARS, FOTR CONVENED AT THE HOLIDAY INN IN MERIDEN, CONN. THE FIRST CONVENTION —A ONE-DAY EVENT—FEATURED JACKSON BECK AND RAYMOND EDWARD JOHNSON AS GUEST CELEBRITIES, AND, UNTIL THEIR DEATHS, THE TWO ATTENDED ALMOST EVERY FOTR. ONE-HUNDRED-AND-SIXTY FANS AND GUESTS WERE PRESENT THAT FIRST YEAR. FOR FOUR YEARS, BEGINNING IN 1978, THE GATHERINGS WERE AT THE HOLIDAY INN IN BRIDGEPORT, CONN. IN 1979, THEY BECAME TWO-DAY AFFAIRS, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY. IN 1982, THE CONVENTION MOVED TO THE HOLIDAY INN AT NEWARK, N.J., WHERE THE EVENT HAS REMAINED SINCE.



JACKSON BECK



KEN PILETIC & CARLTON E. MORSE

ONLY PHOTOS AND AUDIO EXIST FROM THE CONVENTIONS SPANNING 1976 TO 1980. BEGINNING IN 1981, KEN PILETIC BEGAN VIDEOTAPING THE EVENTS, SEMINARS AND RE-CREATIONS. ALSO THAT YEAR, BOB BURCHETT BECAME THE OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHER, A JOB HE FILLED FOR MANY YEARS.

IN THE BEGINNING—SAVE

THE VERY FIRST CONVENTION WAS ON SATURDAY, DEC. 4, 1971, at the Holiday Inn Downtown, 30 Whalley Ave. (near Yale), New Haven, Conn., but the name Friends of Old-Time Radio would not be used until 1976.

“In the 1960s and 1970s, as a pianist and entertainer, I often played radio theme songs and asked the audience to identify them,” Jay Hickerson remembered. “In 1970, at one of the parties, a guest told me of a friend, Sal Trapani, who had recordings of old radio shows, which intrigued me. I contacted Sal, and we subsequently met. After that initial meeting, Sal gave me 100 shows on four quarter-track reels. Thus, my collection of old-time radio shows began. This meeting also started a friendship with Sal, and in 1970 we tossed around the idea of having a radio convention.”

“A mini-convention in the form of a picnic was initiated and collectors in the New England area were invited to the home of Sal Trapani,” recalled Bill Smerckanicz. “The turnout was better than expected with more than 17 radio buffs from New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut attending. It was here that the initial plans for the first convention were decided. The group felt that Connecticut would be the central point for the convention and should be held there.”

“My newsletter, *Hello Again*, which was in its infancy, spread the word of this event,” Jay recalled. “The convention was held in 1971 and we called ourselves both the Lo-Fi Radio Buffs and The Golden Radio Buffs.” Jay promptly announced the group’s decision in his publication. He also asked for a response from his readers and the number of favorable replies exceeded his expectations.

The 1971 event would be referred to as “The First East Coast Convention of Golden Radio Buffs.” Celebrity guests included Brett Morrison, Rosa Rio, Bill Youmans (Rosa’s husband), Mrs. House Jameson, Joe Franklin and Ron Lackmann. Walter Gibson, author of *The Shadow* pulps, also was invited, but he was unable to attend. He would, years later, make up for his absenteeism.

IT IS NOW A REALITY.
A DEPOSIT HAS
BEEN MADE
AND A DATE HAS
BEEN SET.

NOW ALL WE NEED
IS YOU.

— JAY HICKERSON,
IN A TWO-PAGE FLYER PROMOTING THE EVENT

The cost of admission at the very first old-time radio convention was \$9.50 per person, \$18 for couples. The hotel was then charging \$14.75 for a room with one bed, and \$22.50 for a room with two beds. Hickerson mailed his two-page flyer to any and all old-time radio collectors known in New England, as well as those in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. It was also mentioned in the October issues of *Hello Again* and *Stay Tuned*. Towards the bottom of the flyer, it stated: "Only you can make this a success and ensure future get-togethers."

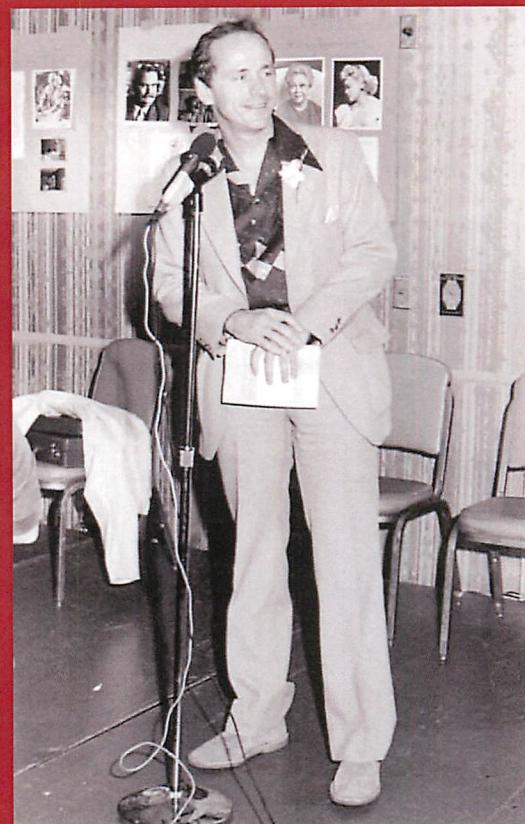
The event began at 1 p.m. and continued until midnight. Informal browsing consisted of vendors offering premiums, magazines,

books, tapes, newsletters, old radios, records and other radio memorabilia for sale or trade. Radio-related movies were screened in a private room at the hotel. There was even a "listening corner" where attendees could walk in, sit down and listen to old radio shows through several headsets. Beginning at 6 p.m., hors d'oeuvres and cocktails were served, and at 7 p.m., a buffet dinner was followed by entertainment in the form of re-creations, talks and panels conducted on stage.

The initial committee members included Hickerson, Mel Shlank, Sal Trapani, Dave Davies, Jack Miller, James O'Neal and Bill Smerckanicz. "The first inkling of a convention was born in the minds of two avid collectors of

old radio, Sal Trapani and Jay Hickerson," remarked Smerckanicz. "Together they hashed the idea of a convention and believed it would be the way to bring all the collectors together in a common interest." Little did they know that the events held on that particular Saturday afternoon would become a standard for conventions yet to come.

"I became a committee member through Jay," recalled Dave Davies. "I had a Radio Shack at the time, and Jay used to come in all the time and buy bulk boxes of tape. After a while I got to know him and asked why all the tape, and he told me about the old radio shows. So every time he came in we began chatting about old radio. And eventually he got me



involved in collecting. When he decided to do his first convention, he asked if I would get involved and I did. I remember providing some of the sound equipment, too."

Shortly after the first convention, "Golden Radio Buffs" was dropped in favor of a more official title; Sal Trapani formed the Society of American Vintage-Radio Enthusiasts (SAVE). Through a charter, the purpose of SAVE was six-fold:

- 1. TO PERPETUATE THE GREAT DAYS OF RADIO.**
- 2. TO ESTABLISH A RADIO MUSEUM TO STORE THE GREAT PROGRAMS OF THE PAST ON TAPE SO THAT THEY WILL NOT BE LOST FOREVER.**
- 3. TO SET UP A RADIO HALL OF FAME TO HONOR THE CONVENTION GUESTS.**
- 4. TO HAVE AN ORGANIZATION OF COLLECTORS SO THAT INFORMATION CAN BE EXCHANGED.**
- 5. TO CATALOG THE GREAT YEARS OF RADIO.**
- 6. TO MAKE AVAILABLE A COMPLETE REFERENCE LIBRARY OF THE YEARS OF OLD-TIME RADIO.**

The second convention, now called SAVE, was held on Oct. 28 and 29, 1972, at the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge in New Britain, Conn. The presentation was a salute to radio's 52nd anniversary. SAVE, under the direction of Trapani, sponsored the next four conventions. Word of the East Coast meeting spread quickly and other old-time radio buffs began organizing their own. A group headed by Rolly Roos formed the Midwest convention, held on May 6, 1972, in Oak Brook, Ill. About 50 men and women were present to talk about old-time radio. Chuck Schaden, radio host of Chicago's *Those Were the Days*, was guest master of ceremonies. A convention in Oklahoma was held the same year, centering on all forms of nostalgia, not just old-time radio.

Personalities included Raymond Edward Johnson, William Spier,

Evie Juster, Charles Michelson, Jackson Beck, Mary Jane Higby, Peg Lynch, Roger Bower and Richard Dana. The attendance tripled. "It was a pretty good crowd," recalled Roy Bright, who flew all the way from Peoria, Illinois. "Some attorney I met there took my wife and me to a Sons of the Desert meeting in New York City. This attorney was someone I had traded with through the mail. While that trip had nothing to do with the convention, he asked if my wife and I wanted to go along and he drove like a wild man through Central Park. I would swear he drove 60 miles per hour through Central Park. That was a memorable one."

The third convention (second SAVE) moved to the Holiday Inn in Meriden, Conn., on Sept. 7 and 8, 1973. With Sal Trapani as executive director, Ira Shprintzen and Dick Wolfe served as associate

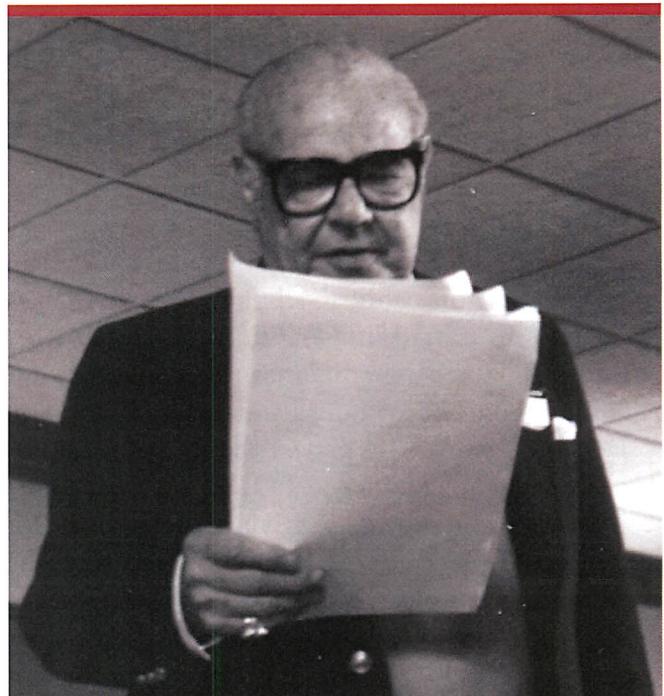
directors. In memory of William Spier, who'd recently died, the prizes became known as the William Spier Awards. For 1973, they honored Jack Pearl "Baron Munchhausen," Minerva Pious "Mrs. Nussbaum" (both of whom appeared in person) and Freeman Gosden (who accepted the award via radio link). Saturday afternoon featured an informal buffet luncheon—all you could eat for \$3. Live music was supplied by a radio organist. The 7 p.m. grand banquet featured a giant cattleman's steak dinner with all the trimmings for a \$10 admission charge. From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., there were seminars on radio drama, free movies, listening rooms, exhibits, lectures by experts in drama, news and comedy, and a sound effects demonstration. Other guests included Will Jordan, Jackson Beck, Peg Lynch and Evie Juster. Raymond Edward

Johnson returned to keep the audience spellbound with a reading of *The Steel Worker*.

The fourth convention, at the Howard Johnson in Milford, Conn., was on Nov. 1 and 2, 1974. The William Spier Award was presented to Himan Brown and Sam Digges. Others attending were Mandel Kramer, Raymond Edward Johnson and Will Jordan.

"I remember when Barbara and I wrote letters to the celebrities, inviting them to attend," recalled Dave Davies. "A lot of them were rejections, but very polite rejections. A few were declines that came in the form of handwritten letters from luminaries such as Jo Stafford, Gene Autry and Frances Langford. I still have them because of the autographs."

The fifth convention (fourth and final SAVE) was at the Park Plaza in New Haven. Awards were presented to Anne Elstner, Staats Cotsworth, Rosa Rio and Irene Wicker. "By 1975, Sal wanted to write shows that were to be broadcast from New York," recalled Hickerson. "He then was working with Ira Shprintzen in New York. Most of the other committee members wanted to continue what we were doing. As a result, Sal left the group and



JACKSON BECK

continued with his ideas. We changed our name to the Friends of Old-Time Radio. In 1976, we held our first convention with that name."



LEE ALLMAN



ALICE REINHEART, EVIE JUSTER & GRACE MATTHEWS

OCTOBER 30, 1976

HOLIDAY INN, MERIDEN, CONN.

JACKSON BECK AND RAYMOND EDWARD JOHNSON attended this one-day convention and, until their deaths, almost all that followed. Beck, Evie Juster, James Maloney, Lee Stanley and Don MacLaughlin starred in *The FBI in Peace and War*. One-hundred-and-sixty fans and guests were present. Members of the original committee consisted of 12 people: Among them, Julie and Larry DeSalvatore, Ann and Peter Greco, Lora Palmer, Joe Webb, Stu Weiss, Carol and Bob Witte.

Jack McCarthy, who played the role of The Green Hornet in the early 1950s, was a guest, making his one and only appearance at FOTR. He died soon after.

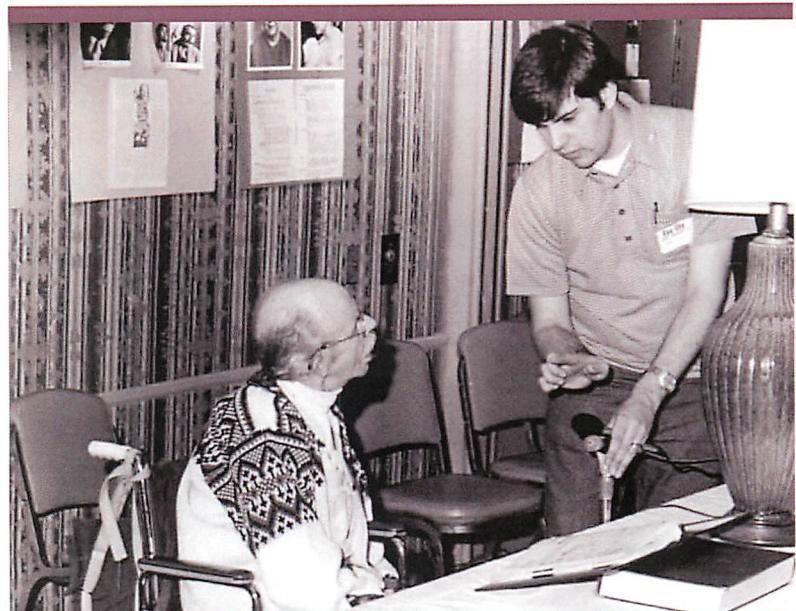
Dick Curland hosted a trivia panel. James Maloney presented a slide show about old-time radio. Hamilton O'Hara offered a sound effects workshop. Tony Esposito handled the movie room, screening movies based on old radio shows.

“What I remember most about that first convention is the awe and wonder I felt, as I sat (with my mouth ajar most of the time), and watched my ‘heroes’—like the Green Hornet (Jack McCarthy) and the host of *Inner Sanctum* (Raymond Edward Johnson),” recalled Gary Yogg. “There was also a special unscheduled appearance by radio’s Mike Hammer (and television’s Stu Bergman), Larry Haines, and a mesmerizing sound effects demonstration.”



EARLY COMMITTEE

"Hamilton O'Hara offered a sound effects workshop where he gave an amazing demonstration of footsteps," Professor Michael Biel remembered. "Donning a special pair of shoes, he first demonstrated different styles and speeds of men walking. He then portrayed a woman walking in high heels, and kids walking and skipping. Then he had two men walking at the same time at different paces seemingly wearing different types of shoes. Then, simultaneously, he added the woman in high heels, and then perhaps another man, a kid, and even another woman. All at the same time and all at different tempos. It looked like a tap dance and sounded like a crowd but it was all coming from one pair of feet. I wish we had it on film."



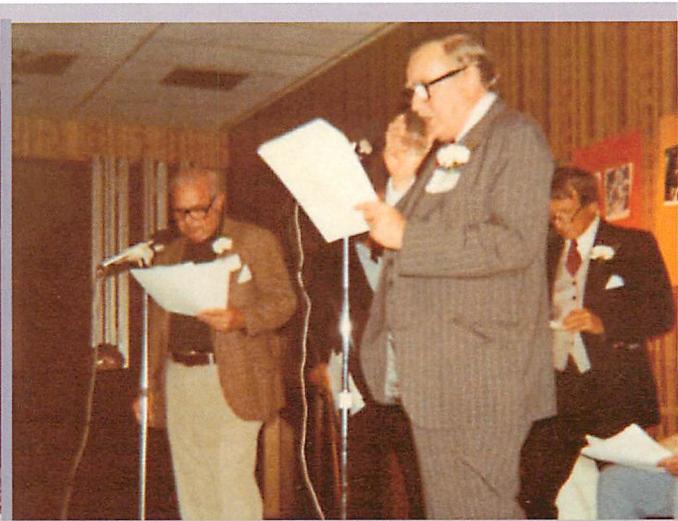
JOE WEBB WITH RAYMOND EDWARD JOHNSON

OCTOBER 1, 1977 HOLIDAY INN, MERIDEN, CONN.

ROSA RIO PROVIDED ORGAN MUSIC AND WOULD DO SO FOR SEVERAL YEARS. *Our Gal Sunday* and *The Shadow*, starring Mandel Kramer and Grace Matthews, were presented. Ed Blainey provided the sound effects. Warren Somerville directed. Other new guests were Court Benson, Fred Foy, James Monks, Vicki Vola and Blair Walliser. It was in 1977 that Ken Piletic joined the committee.



GRACE MATTHEWS & MANDEL KRAMER, 1977



JACKSON BECK & COURT BENSON



FRED FOY, 1977

The general chairman was Jay Hickerson. Bob Witte was the master of ceremonies. Staffing consisted of Stu Weiss, Julie and Larry DeSalvatore, Joe Webb and Ed Corcoran. Raymond Edward Johnson did a dramatic reading in the afternoon. Larry DeSalvatore and Jay Hickerson hosted a quiz program, "Name That Show."

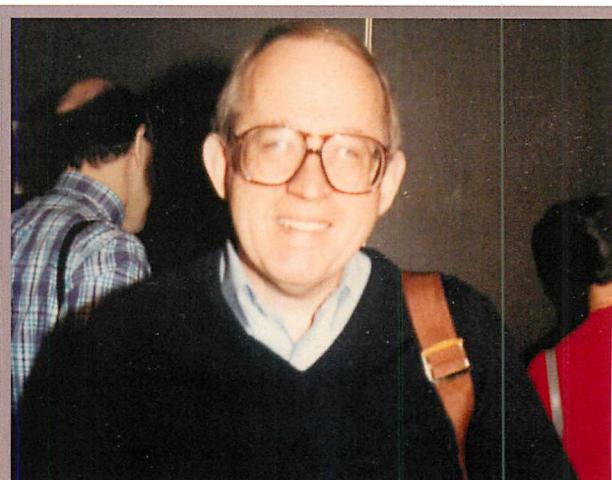
OCTOBER 1, 1978 HOLIDAY INN, BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

RE-CREATIONS PERFORMED WERE *THE ROMANCE OF HELEN TRENT*, starring Alice Reinheart, *Front Page Farrell* and *Counterspy*. Some new guests present that year included Lee Allman, George Ansbro, Ira Ashley, Bob Dixon and Betty Wragge. Bob Prescott Sr. and Jr. helped Ed Blainey with the sound effects.

"Many of the beloved convention guests worked in the relatively anonymous world of soap operas during the Golden Age of Radio and got to strut their stuff in a range of roles in Connecticut and Newark," explained Sean Dougherty. "Our annual award for the performer who shows outstanding dedication to the convention is named for one such actress, Florence Williams of *Front Page Farrell*, who passed away in 1995."



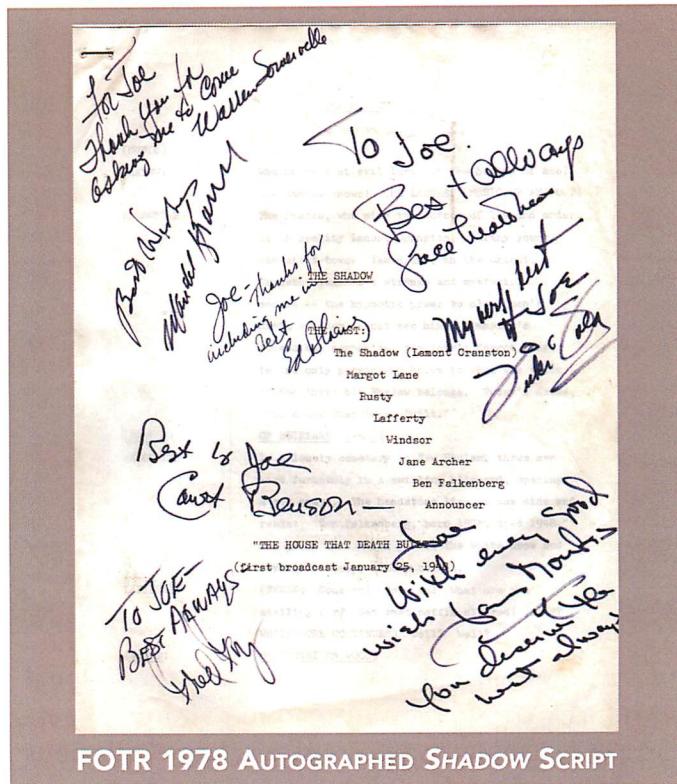
IRA ASHLEY



BOB BURCHETT

Among the notable guests was Blair Walliser, director of such radio programs as *Backstage Wife*, *Chandu the Magician*, *Front Page Farrell*, *Harold Teen*, *Just Plain Bill* and *The Romance of Helen Trent*. Lee Stanley, child actor on *Archie Andrews* and *Jack Armstrong*, also attended. Rosa Rio helped supply the music. Two acting workshops and two sound effects workshops were conducted. Dick Curnand hosted the trivia contest. Gary Yogg offered a teaching workshop. Raymond Edward Johnson provided dramatic readings from Shakespeare.

Bob Burchett began taking photographs of the convention beginning in 1978, and quickly became the official convention photographer—a post he held for many years. “My wife had a 35mm camera so I used it that year and took six rolls of film,” Bob recalled. “Only when I got home did I discover only three rolls had been loaded right. But it gave me something to do and I enjoyed it.”



FOTR 1978 AUTOGRAPHED SHADOW SCRIPT

OCTOBER 20, 1979 HOLIDAY INN, BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

THE CONVENTION BEGAN FRIDAY EVENING THIS YEAR. Anthony Tollin, who became a staple at the event, presented a slide show about *The Shadow*. Re-creations performed were *Mark Trail* starring Jackson Beck, *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* starring Mandel Kramer and Don MacLaughlin, and *Joyce Jordan*. Also present were Ralph Bell, Ward Byron, Bill Griffis, Art Hanna, Peg Lynch, Ted Mallie, Ian Martin, Ted Malone, Arnold Stang and Sybil Trent. Bob Prescott and his two sons, Bob and Pete, were now doing the sound effects.

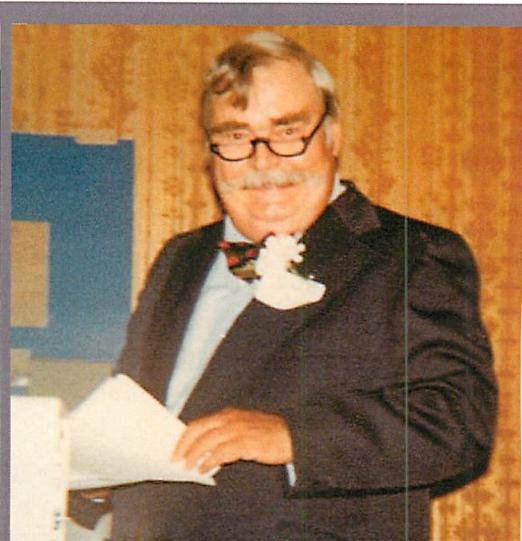
This year the events included workshops on equipment, video tape and newsletters. Joe Webb began making tapes of the convention radio show performances available for a minimal fee. “We also began getting more fans from all over the country and Canada,” recalled Jay Hickerson.

“The first radio re-creation was about to begin, and Grace Matthews was approaching the crowd with a script, already marked, in her hands as she greeted friends she hadn’t seen in years,” recalled Steven Hiss. “Elspeth Eric said, ‘Darling, you have marked your script for the mother. I think that is my part.’ Well, the first of an endless stream of ‘Jay!’ rang out to make the decision as to who played which part. Grace was mistaken and as she slowly approached the stage, she re-marked the script with a different color pen. Within a couple minutes she had to scream and cry like a baby and generally emote in the most thrilling way. And she never missed a cue.”

“Before we were in Newark we were in Bridgeport, Connecticut,” recalled Barb Davies. “It was there that Kenny Delmar had a heart attack.” Delmar had been invited the year prior, but declined, probably because of health reasons. He paid a visit to FOTR in 1979, unannounced, and stood on stage doing a monologue. “My first FOTR Convention was in 1979,” recalled Arthur Anderson. “Kenny Delmar was



BETTY PRESCOTT (BOB'S WIFE) WITH BOB BURCHETT



BOB PRESCOTT

booked to perform but was just out of the hospital with heart trouble. So instead of a dramatic performance, he sat on a stool and gave hilarious imitations of the foreign-born doctors who treated him."

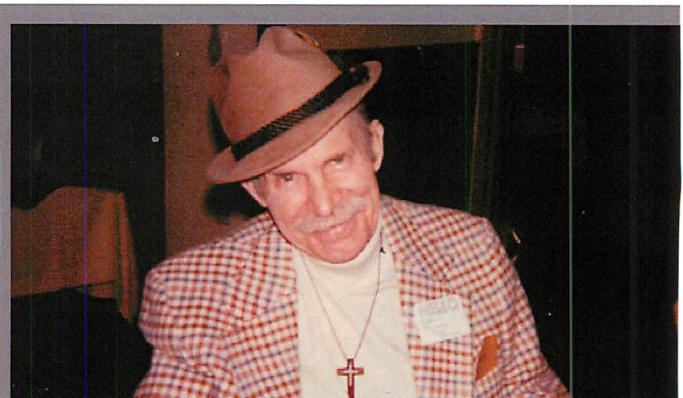
"We were sitting at the same table with a friend of ours, Herb Carlin, who was a doctor," recalled Dave Davies. "And Kenny came in, walked up on stage and sat down and gave a little talk. Herb turned to me and said, 'He's going to have another heart attack, and I mean soon.' And I said, 'Really? How do you know?' And Herb said, 'I can hear his lungs filling up.' Well, Kenny exhaustedly got off the stage and was helped out the door and within seconds, one of the hotel managers stepped in and with the proverbial 'Is there a doctor in the house?' Herb Carlin jumped up and ran out and, sure

enough, Delmar had collapsed in the hallway and Herb had to give him CPR until the ambulance arrived. Delmar survived it and it was a few years later that he passed away."

"The convention where I met Peg Lynch stands out in my memory," recalled Bob Burchett. "I walked into the dining room for breakfast and I saw Ron Lackmann sitting with her. They were just about finished, so Ron left, but she stayed. It was like I was doing a script with her. I laughed my way through breakfast. Sunday morning Harold Zeigler wanted me to do an interview with her. No one was around and we talked for an hour. Or I might say she talked and I laughed for an hour. I had two questions and never got to the second one. She called it the Peg and Bob Show. This was the beginning of a great friendship that has lasted to this day."



ARTHUR ANDERSON



RAYMOND EDWARD JOHNSON

THE ALLEN ROCKFORD AWARD

BEGINNING IN OCTOBER 1979, THE CONVENTION ESTABLISHED THE ALLEN ROCKFORD AWARD, recognizing standout individuals who assisted with the hobby and the smooth operation of the convention. Ken Piletic was the first recipient. He began recording shows off the air at age 11 in the late 1940s, and some of the recordings in many collections may have originated as a result of Ken's foresight. An avid ham radio operator, Ken also was the co-founder of ORCATS, The Oldtime Radio Collectors and Traders Society.

The award is named for Allen Rockford (1943-1979), an on-air personality who died of heart failure in March of 1979. "According to colleagues, Allen was evangelical in converting folks to the wonders of old-time radio and was always happy to answer questions posed by newcomers to the hobby," recalled Derek Tague. "The Friends of Old-Time Radio established the Allen Rockford Award to recognize those who have kept his spirit alive. Nominations were usually made by FOTR committee members and were voted on during the mid-winter planning meeting."

Rockford was an early champion of old-time radio in the embryonic days when it became a nostalgic revival. With his business partner, Don Richardson, the two began offering radio programs for sale on reel-to-reel and audio cassette. They founded the fan publication, *Nostalgia Radio News*, and for 12 years hosted a radio program called "Sounds of Yesterday." Since he was one of the earliest crusaders and conservationists of old-time radio, it was only fitting to name an award after him. The award was given every year (contrary to the list of recipients in a number of past FOTR program guides given to attendees).



ALLEN ROCKFORD & DON RICHARDSON

1979 KEN PILETIC, CO-FOUNDER OF THE OLD-TIME RADIO COLLECTORS AND TRADERS SOCIETY (ORCATS)

1980 JOHN DUNNING, AUTHOR OF *TUNE IN YESTERDAY* (1976) AND *ON THE AIR* (1998)

1980 CHARLES INGERSOLL, FOUNDER OF THE RADIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA (RHSA)

1981 CHARLES STUMPF, AUTHOR OF *HEAVENLY DAYS: THE STORY OF FIBBER McGEE AND MOLLY* (1987)

1982 ROGER HILL, CO-FOUNDER OF THE NORTH AMERICAN RADIO ARCHIVES (NARA)

1983 RAY STANICH, PIONEER IN THE FIELD OF OLD-TIME RADIO RESEARCH

1984 BOB BURNHAM, FOUNDER OF BRC PRODUCTIONS

1984 JIM SNYDER, ARCHIVIST KNOWN FOR HIS WORK WITH NARA

1985 DICK OSGOOD, ACTOR, ANNOUNCER AND AUTHOR OF *WYXIE WONDERLAND* (1981)

1986 FRANK BRESEE, RADIO ACTOR AND HOST OF "THE GOLDEN DAYS OF RADIO"

1987 THE SOCIETY TO PRESERVE AND ENCOURAGE RADIO DRAMA, VARIETY AND COMEDY (SPERDVAC)

1988 BARRY HILL, ARCHIVIST AND STAGE ACTOR FOR THE DAVE WARREN PLAYERS

1988 BARBARA WATKINS OF SPERDVAC

1989 BOB BURCHETT, PUBLISHER OF THE OLD-TIME RADIO DIGEST AND CO-FOUNDER OF THE CINCINNATI OLD TIME RADIO & NOSTALGIA CONVENTION.

1989 TERRY SALOMONSON, ARCHIVIST, HISTORIAN AND AUTHORITY ON *THE LONE RANGER*

1990 DON ASTON, SOUND EFFECTS PROVIDER FOR RE-CREATIONS

1990 DAVE WARREN, RADIO ARTIST FOR RE-CREATIONS AT CONVENTIONS

1991 TOM MONROE, ARCHIVIST AND CO-FOUNDER OF OTR MEMORIES

1991 ANTHONY TOLLIN, AUTHORITY AND ARCHIVIST OF *THE SHADOW*

1992 MAX SCHMID, RADIO HOST OF "THE GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO"

1992 GARY YOGGY, HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR OF *RIDING THE VIDEO RANGE* (1995)

1993 JACK FRENCH, HISTORIAN AND EDITOR OF *NARA NEWS* AND *RADIO RECALL*

1993 LARRY AND JOHN GASSMAN, RADIO SHOW CO-HOSTS

1994 BILL BRAGG, RADIO HOST AND FOUNDER OF *YESTERDAY USA*

1994 DAVID SIEGEL, HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR OF NUMEROUS BOOKS ABOUT OLD-TIME RADIO

1995 BOBB LYNES, ACTOR, AUTHOR AND RADIO HOST OF "DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL"

1995 ART SCHREIBER, FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL BROADCASTERS HALL OF FAME

1995 JOE WEBB, PUBLISHER OF *COLLECTOR'S CORNER*

1996 BILL NADEL, AUTHOR, HISTORIAN AND DIRECTOR OF RADIO RE-CREATIONS

1996 DON RAMLOW, DIRECTOR OF RADIO RE-CREATIONS

1997 **ED CLUTE**, MUSICIAN FOR RE-CREATIONS

1997 **MICHAEL SPRAGUE**, FOUNDER OF THE RADIO ENTHUSIASTS OF PUGET SOUND (REPS)

1998 **CHUCK SCHADEN**, RADIO HOST OF "THOSE WERE THE DAYS"

1999 **CHARLIE SUMMERS**, EDITOR OF THE ON-LINE OLD TIME RADIO DIGEST

2000 **NANA CLUTE**, ASSISTANT TO **ED CLUTE**

2000 **STEVE HISS**, PUBLISHER OF THE NATIONAL OLD TIME RADIO ENTHUSIASTS (NOTRE)

2000 **MARY RAMLOW**, ASSISTANT ON PANELS AND RE-CREATIONS

2001 **MICHAEL HENRY**, STAFFER OF THE LIBRARY OF RECORDED SOUND, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

2001 **STEVE LEWIS**, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF THE GOTHAM RADIO PLAYERS

2001 **DEREK TAGUE**, HOST OF NUMEROUS PANELS AT FOTR

2001 **STUART WEISS**, PARTICIPATED IN FOTR'S EARLIEST YEARS AND RADIO HOST OF "THE POP SHOPPE"

2002 **ART PIERCE**, CO-AUTHOR OF *Lux Presents Hollywood* (1995)

2002 **MITCH WEISBERG**, HOST AND PANEL LEADER FOR MANY EVENTS AT FOTR

2003 **SEAN DOUGHERTY**, PUBLIC RELATIONS PROMOTER OF FOTR FUNCTIONS FOR MORE THAN A DECADE

2003 **LORA PALMER**, REGISTRATION TABLE WORKER AT FOTR FOR MANY YEARS

2003 **DAVID ZWENGLER**, ACTOR AND FOUNDER OF THE ANNUAL SCRIPT-WRITING CONTEST AT FOTR

2004 **ALICE ANDERSON**, REGISTRATION TABLE WORKER AT FOTR FOR MANY YEARS

2004 **FRED AND ELLEN BERNEY**, PRESERVERS OF FOTR SEMINARS AND OTHER PROGRAMS

2004 **EVA WEISBERG**, ASSISTANT ON PANELS AND REGISTRATION

2004 **BRIAN GARI**, GRANDSON OF EDDIE CANTOR AND HISTORIAN OF ALL THINGS EDDIE CANTOR

2005 **ROBERT NEWMAN**, PUBLISHER OF *RRL On The Air*

2005 **WALT MITCHELL**, CONDUCTOR OF WORKSHOPS WITH MARY LOU WALLACE

2005 **MARY LOU WALLACE**, CONDUCTOR OF WORKSHOPS WITH WALT MITCHELL

2006 **MAGGIE THOMPSON**, PANEL PARTICIPANT AND COMICS EXPERT

2007 **RANDY LARSON**, FACILITATOR OF BRINGING THE CHICAGO RADIO PLAYERS TO FOTR

2008 **BART CURTIS**, SOUND EFFECTS PROVIDER FOR RE-CREATIONS

2008 **EDGAR RUSSELL III**, DIRECTOR OF A NUMBER OF RE-CREATIONS AND WRITER OF SEVERAL ORIGINAL PRIZE-WINNING SHOWS

2009 **KEN STOCKINGER**, VOLUNTEER STAFFER WHO ALSO PROVIDED A NUMBER OF PRESENTATIONS

2010 **NEAL ELLIS**, HOST OF THE RADIO ONCE MORE NETWORK

IN 1997, WALTER AND JEFF MULLER RECEIVED SPECIAL AWARDS SIMILAR TO THE ALLEN ROCKFORD AWARD FOR NUMEROUS YEARS OF SERVICE AND DEDICATION TO THE FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO CONVENTION.

OCTOBER 3-4, 1980

HOLIDAY INN, BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

PERFORMANCES WERE "CINDERELLA" FROM *LET'S PRETEND* with many child actors who played juvenile roles on radio, including Arthur Anderson, Gwen Davies, Don Hughes, Evie Juster, Bill Lipton and Sybil Trent. Jay Hickerson presented the first of several sing-a-longs. Also presented was "Strange," hosted by Walter Gibson, and "Death Across the Board" from *Inner Sanctum* hosted by Raymond Edward Johnson. Also present were Fran Carlon, Betty Tyler Karp and Rita Lloyd.

"Evie Juster was troubled," recalled Bill Nadel. "She had never been asked to play a black person before. The veteran actress of hundreds of radio shows was perplexed. How was she to play Birdie in a re-creation of *The Great Gildersleeve*? 'Play her Southern,' I suggested. 'But not the accent Shirley Mitchell is doing.' Relieved, Evie was wonderful that evening."



RITA LLOYD & BOB BURCHETT

FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO

OCTOBER 16-17, 1981

HOLIDAY INN, BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

BEGINNING WITH THIS CONVENTION, THE SEMINARS WERE NOW BEING VIDEO-TAPED BY KEN PILETIC. Up to this point, they were audio taped. Re-creations included *My True Story*, and *Nick Carter, Master Detective* with Lon Clark and Charlotte Manson reprising their roles. New guests included Nancy Douglass, Elspeth Eric, Teri Keane, Ann Loring, Arnold Moss, Bill Owen, script writer Sidney Slon and a special appearance by Kenny Delmar.

Events and seminars included "OTR in the Community" and the first of what would become many panels centered on old-time radio authors. An Al Jolson special was presented by Ed Greenbaum and Herb Goldman of the International Al Jolson Society, Inc. This ultimately led to an annual Al Jolson Special from the same organization. Raymond Edward Johnson recreated "The Cask of Amontillado."

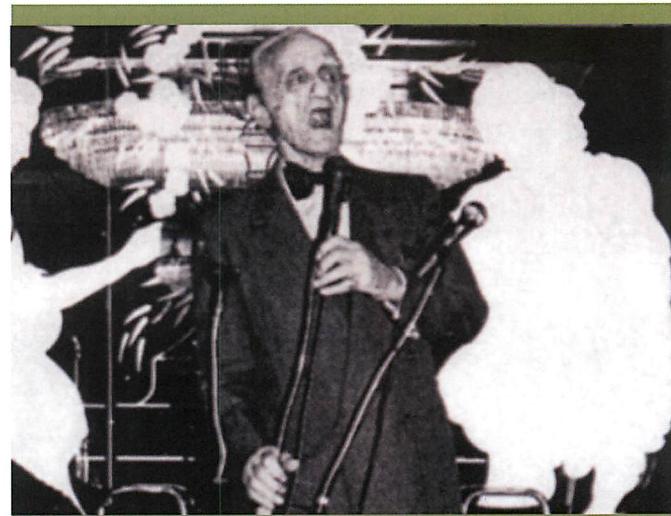
Recording techniques was the focus of one workshop, while "Views of Collecting Experts" became a highlight.

"That was the year I met Ron and Linda Downey, who had a publishing business in North Carolina," recalled Terry Salomonson. "He did really great soft-cover books that people wrote and he published a few things for me. I also wrote articles for him from time to time."

Arthur Tracy entertained with songs for the first of several conventions. "Tracy came to the convention even in years we never sent an invitation," recalled Bill Nadel. "Invariably he would call at the last minute wanting a ride to the Holiday Inn North, and curse in Yiddish if a ride wasn't provided. One year when he came with a handful of sheet music, he was introduced to Ed Clute, who would accompany him. Arthur, frantic, didn't know what to do. 'How can he read my music, he's blind!' the Street Singer of England and America exclaimed. 'That's true,' we responded. 'But he'll be the best accompanist you ever had.' And Ed was!"

"I enjoyed accompanying on piano for the recreations, but, as my activities expanded, such as the registration table, my own dealer's table, constantly running around, I relinquished my piano accompaniment duties to a very capable Ed Clute and, more recently, Mike Mancel," recalled Jay Hickerson.

"In 1981, as a boy of 14, I attended my first FOTR convention, having accidentally learned of its existence from an off-hand comment made by curator Art Schreiber during a visit to the OTR museum," recalled John Eccles. "I was welcomed with open arms by all of the invited guests and fellow OTR fans. Imagine the excitement I felt after spending my childhood listening to these programs and then having the opportunity to actually see



ARTHUR TRACY, 1984



JACKSON BECK, 1981

many of the actors, actresses, writers and directors who were responsible for them. Not only was I able to see them, but they were all so generous and giving of their time that I was able to meet and talk with them about many of their experiences during radio's golden age."

OCTOBER 22–23, 1982 HOLIDAY INN, NEWARK, N.J.

BEGINNING IN 1982, THE EVENT MOVED TO WHAT WOULD BECOME ITS PERMANENT HOME, the Holiday Inn in Newark, N.J.

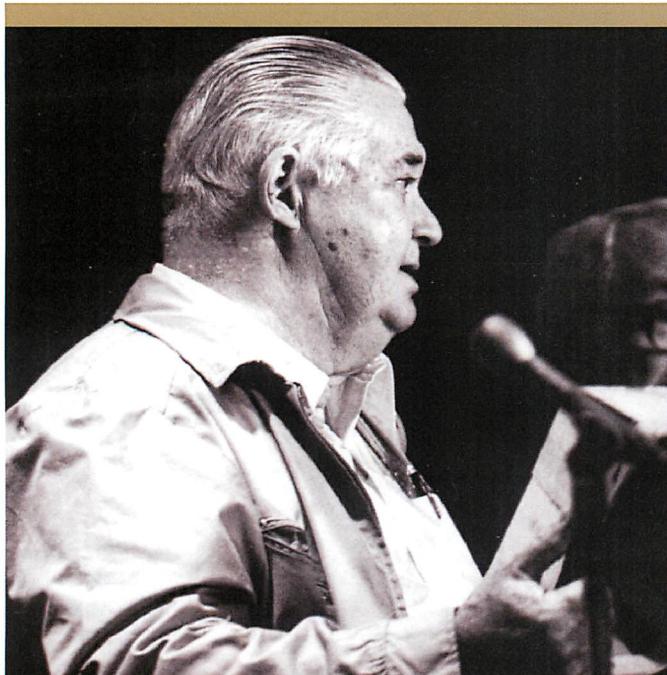
Performances included *Aunt Jenny*, and *The Green Hornet* with Dwight Weist, Ezra Stone, Jackson Beck and Lee Allman. New guests were Don Buka, Jack Grimes, Abby Lewis, Dick Osgood, Frank Papp,

Ruth Russell, Terry Ross, Jane Ward, Florence Williams and Alice Yourman. Terry Ross now handled the sound effects. Karen Hickerson entertained with a few songs for the first of several times.

Among the highlights of the

weekend was a tape deck presentation with Manos Nomikos of TEAC. The National Broadcasters Hall of Fame was held in the Bergen Room. Ken Piletic hosted a panel about OTR clubs. Jim Snyder talked about the *Lux*

Radio Theatre. Terry Salomonson, Fran Striker Jr. and Dick Osgood discussed *The Lone Ranger*. Mary Wallace and Walt Mitchell presented "Flubs and Fluffs." Dick Osgood was on the WXYZ panel.



TERRY ROSS



ALICE REINHEART & FLORENCE WILLIAMS

NOVEMBER 11-12, 1983

BEGINNING IN 1983, THE CONVENTION LASTED TWO FULL DAYS. Prior to this, the event started Friday afternoon and ran through all of Saturday. From this point until 1992, FOTR had at least 45 dealers.

Re-creations included "The Brave Little Tailor" from *Let's Pretend*, directed by Arthur Anderson, with much of the original cast. Such legends as Orson Welles and Nila Mack had worked alongside Arthur, who took the director's chair for the first of many times. Anthony Tollin directed *The Shadow* with many of the program's alumni, including Ken Roberts, Margot Stevenson, Gertrude Warner and Jackson Beck. New guests were Joan Bishop, Nancy Coleman, Helen Coule, Cliff Carpenter, Ruth Duskin, Bob Guibert, Pat Hosley, Ernest Ricca, Karl Weber and Miriam Wolff. Rosa Rio and Ted Malone put on a musical program. Anthony Tollin began coordinating the performances, something Joe Webb had done up to this time. "Can anyone forget the 'baby cry-off' between Miriam Wolff and Sybil Trent?" asked Sean Dougherty.

Seminars included Edgar Bergen's career by Gary Yogg, how to create radio logs by Ray Stanich, the care and feeding of electrical transcription discs by Bill Jaker, and The Lone Ranger's Birthday Party with Fran Striker Jr. and Dick Osgood. Ruth Duskin Feldman, Joan Bishop Barber and Patrick Conlon talked informally on stage about being *Quiz Kids*. Dave Reznick hosted "Radio's Flops." Anthony Tollin chaired a panel of *The Shadow*, with a stellar cast that included Kenny Delmar, Walter Gibson, Bill Johnstone, John Nanovic, Rosa Rio, Margot Stevenson, Gertrude Warner and Ken Roberts.

The radio career of Mercedes McCambridge was hosted by Ron Lackmann, who not only worshipped the actress, but 22 years later would author a biography about her.

"Ron Lackmann's friend Casandra Danz was with him, and she was a part of the 'High Heeled Women' who performed on Broadway," recalled Barb Davies. "She started to sing 'God Bless America' at three in the morning. She said it was okay because no one would be upset to hear that song. We warned her that she could be thrown out of the hotel and she said, 'Don't be silly. No one would object.' She was right."

"Barbara Watkins and I are relative late-comers to the annual Friends of Old Time Radio conventions," remarked Bobb Lynes. "Our first time was in 1983 when (as SPERDVAC president) I was sent back to Newark to find out how to plan and run an OTR convention, which SPERDVAC did the next year. We learned from the masters of FOTR. Having been in contact and trading with many of the attendees, it was a great treat to finally meet them face-to-face. Most of them made us instantly feel very welcome. As a result, we've attended all but a couple of conventions since then."

Frequent attendees express excitement when they recall meeting the men and women who voiced the characters they came to know and love. In 1983, they flocked to Newark to catch a glimpse of Parley Baer, *Gunsmoke*'s Chester (and mayor of Mayberry on television's *The Andy Griffith Show*), who became FOTR's first West Coast guest. "Of course, the performers themselves get a thrill from the fans as well," added Sean Dougherty. "When aging character actor Maurice Ellis attended his first

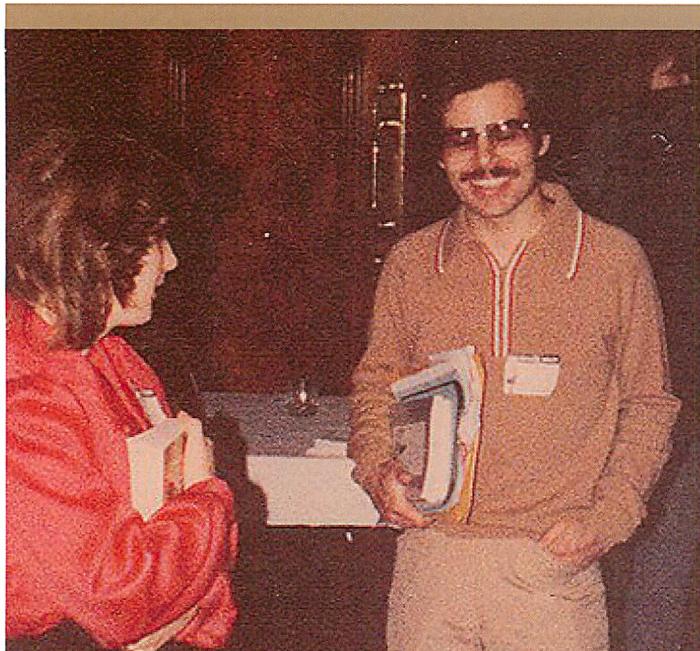


ARTHUR ANDERSON



MIRIAM WOLFF

convention in 1996, he was overcome with emotion when recognized by the crowd at dinner and was reduced to tears. When Parley Baer attended his first convention in 1983, he too couldn't believe the standing ovation for him when he walked into the Friday banquet."



ANDY BLATT



PARLEY BAER 1983

"The North American Radio Archives was trying hard to hold a convention on the West Coast, and Parley Baer was one of the guests who agreed to attend," recalled Don Aston. "The convention just couldn't get the support needed so it did not happen."

"Frank Nelson was an invited guest in 1983 and agreed to come to FOTR that year as one of the first West Coast guests," explained Terry Salomonson. "Frank was having some serious health issues and the closer the convention approached, it became apparent that he was not going to be able to attend. Hoping not to disappoint the convention, he asked Parley if he would consider taking his place. Parley stepped in at the last minute for his friend.

"Parley arrived at the hotel in the evening during the night's activities and after checking in and refreshing himself in his room,

he quietly slipped in one of the side doors to the convention room where Jay Hickerson was at the keyboard in the middle of an event," Terry continued. "When Jay noticed Parley entering the room, he stopped what he was playing and started playing the theme music from *Gunsmoke*. Everyone in the room by this time noticed Parley standing there, rose and started a huge applause. For a moment Parley thought someone else had entered the room behind him and turned around to find no one else standing there, except himself. When the thought occurred that it was for him, he was both shocked and touched, and teared up at the moment from the love and respect being offered to him from the entire room full of strangers."

Don Aston recalled, "When he was given an award at FOTR for his days in radio, Parley exclaimed, 'Eat your heart out, Bill Conrad.'"

Lee Munsick drove Parley from the airport and was standing next to him when he entered the room. Lee explained that for many of the radio celebrities, their FOTR experiences were the first time they had in-person audience recognition for their work. So many of them slaved away in sealed radio or film studios, often with no credits, without any direct contact with an audience or a fan. Lee recalled that sometimes it was hard to get them to come the first time, but then it was hard to keep them away!

It was not Parley Baer's last convention. He also attended the Cincinnati OTR gathering for many years and allowed Salomonson to start giving out the annual Parley E. Baer Award. The actor personally presented the first honor on April 19, 1997.

"Parley and I became friends right from the first convention he attended (although not to the

level of Terry) and we spent a lot of time in conversations," recalled Don Ramlow. "For many years, Mary and I would arrive on Tuesday or Wednesday at FOTR, so that we had time to rest up before the con started. One year, Mary and I were getting on the elevator just when Parley was getting off. He immediately asked Mary and me if we had had dinner yet and invited us to dine with him and a few of his friends. Imagine our surprise when the few friends were most of the West Coast guests who had agreed to perform in the *Gunsmoke* re-creations. Mary and I were the only non-professionals in the entire group of about 12 to 14 people. We were dining in the restaurant at the hotel, which had never been known for its service at that time, and all of the meals were taking forever to arrive. Finally, Parley had had enough and he walked over to talk with the waitress. And with his best radio voice he said, 'Madam, you have taken low service to a new high,' whereupon many of us started laughing. That was a special moment."



PARLEY BAER

NOVEMBER 19–20, 1984

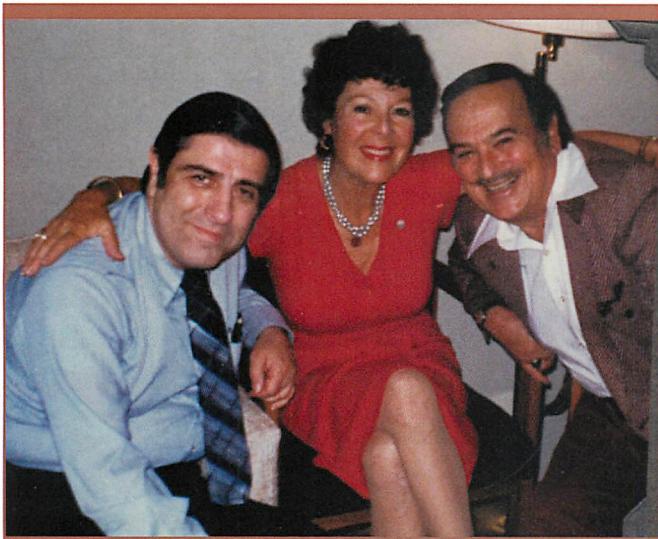
PERFORMANCES INCLUDED *MR. DISTRICT ATTORNEY* with Dwight Weist and Vicki Vola, and *Grand Central Station*. Eddie Layton provided the music. New guests were Margaret Draper, Helene Dumas, Edith Meiser, Stella Reynolds, Adele Ronson, Joe DeSantis and Arthur Peterson. New West Coast guests included Frank Nelson and Veola Vonn, who had originally been scheduled to attend the year before.

Seminars included radio bloopers hosted by Walt Mitchell and Mary Lou Wallace, a review of radio's *Escape* by Terry Salomonson, and an Edith Meiser discussion of writing scripts for the *Sherlock Holmes* radio programs. John Eccles hosted a trivia contest. "Ken Piletic was the only participant to correctly state Sam Spade's detective license number, featured at the start of every radio broadcast, which drew an ovation from the crowd," John Eccles recalled.

"We always had a party in our hotel room, and Frank and Viola were up at the party," Dave Davies remembered. "Someone wanted to take a picture of Barbara and me with Frank. These were nightly after-convention parties to which our favorite guest stars were invited and held our interest with their amusing stories of their show business experiences."

"One time Frank was there with Viola," Barb Davies recollected. "I asked if he would take a picture with me. He said yes, but only if I sat on his lap. So I did and he put his hand on my knee and moved my skirt up a bit. Then he said, 'Now you may take the photo.' The next year he was there again and I asked him to autograph the photo; he did, with the line: *Better luck next time Honey.*"

"During the 1984 convention, Don Aston and Gary Yogg gave a presentation on radio westerns, and I was disappointed that the Tom Mix show only got about five minutes," Jack French recounted. "I talked



DAVID SIEGEL, VEOLA VONN, & FRANK NELSON

to Don and he said that next year he would do an entire one on *Tom Mix* if I would help. I agreed. By 1985, Don had located a video of Curley Bradley doing a *Tom Mix* re-creation which Jim Harmon had arranged. I had typed out a script based on the May 8, 1945, episode of *Tom Mix*, which I intended to cast and perform as another section of our presentation. At FOTR, I cast Dave Zwengler as Tom, Dave Warren as Mike Shaw, Lora Palmer as Drusilla, Jim Snyder as the villain, K-12, Bob Burchett as the announcer, and Joe Webb doubling as Mr. Moonlight and a Chinese houseboy. As director, I was also in charge of sound effects. I used an electric razor for the airplane engine, an

incongruity that Jim Snyder still teases me about today. Dave Warren had so much fun doing this that the next year (1986) he founded the Dave Warren Players with Burchett, Zwengler and others in his rep company. They would go on to perform many re-creations at FOTR conventions."

"Dave Warren was a wonderful person," recalled Barb Davies. "He and Bob Burchett had been friends since school days in Portsmouth, Ohio. They went to art school together and remained friends for years. Dave was once chosen to be the artist for all the federal judges. He was in the top ten selected, but he did not get the appointment to be the artist. I remember the year a blind fellow named Mike came to the conventions with his dog. Mike won the raffle to have Dave do a sketch of him. We all watched over Dave's shoulder to see what he was doing. Dave included the dog in his sketch. Mike could not have been happier to think that Dave would include the dog."



ALICE REINHEART

GARY KRAMER

OCTOBER 11-12, 1985

IF ANYONE DOUBTED WHETHER FOTR COULD TOP THE HIGH SPOTS OF THE PAST THREE CONVENTIONS, their concerns vanished as *The Lone Ranger* was the centerpiece for this year's convention. Fourteen alumni of WXYZ attended and were involved in a special *Lone Ranger* presentation. They included Fred Foy, Michael Tolan, Jim Fletcher, Lee Allman, Ernie Winstanley, Tom Dougall, Whit Vernon, Fred Flowerday, Tony Caminita, Elaine Alpert and Harry Goldstein. The 50th anniversary celebration of *The Lone Ranger* included Leta Beemer Peterson, widow of actor Brace Beemer, who received a posthumous award for him.

"A favorite duty of mine was to give out the awards," remarked Jay Hickerson. "Every guest received one. As you well know, in show business, no matter how talented one is, one minute they are on top of the world and famous, only to be forgotten a minute later. Not so at our conventions. The gratitude that I've seen on the faces of our special guests and 'former' stars upon hearing the applause for their work and talent, brought me great joy as I handed them their awards."

"The awards that I have been able to give to the special guests truly have been my rewards," Brian Gari said. "Watching Beverly Washburn's shock and tears as I handed her the trophy, or when I was giving the award to Clay Cole, who had no idea he was getting one and had to be located at the last minute to receive it. He was so ecstatic and it meant so much to him, as it would be the last award he was to receive, passing away a little more than a year later."

Another highlight was Jackson Beck, who participated in *The Adventures of Superman*, perhaps the one radio program he is best known for.

Radio director William N. Robson was a guest and re-created "Sorry, Wrong Number" with Lucille Fletcher, who was also a guest that year. "That was a special moment for me," recalled Donald Ramlow. "I was always a fan of *Suspense*, as you well know. Well, one day, after already having attended a couple of FOTR cons, I was listening to an episode of *Suspense*, 'The Diary of Sophronia Winters,' when the character played by Agnes Moorehead asked why she was being threatened. She said, 'I'm just a woman from Kalamazoo, and my father works at the First National Bank,' etc. I had already been a fan of Fletcher, but when I heard that dialogue, it made me want to find out more about her. I then started looking through reference books and articles, where I eventually discovered her address and phone number. I mailed her a letter, but she didn't respond right away. I followed with a phone call, and she answered the phone. I introduced myself and explained why I was contacting her. She then went on to explain that a roommate of hers at college had grown up in Kalamazoo and that she included this in her story as an inside reference. We talked several times after that and she was amazed to find out about all the OTR fans out there. She eventually gave me permission to share her address with FOTR, which resulted in an invitation to the convention. She attended, along with her daughters, and authorized the performance of 'Sorry, Wrong Number,' and she participated in several panels."



BRIAN GARI & CLAY COLE



DAVID SIEGEL & WILLIAM N. ROBSON



BOB BURNHAM

"I remember when we had an obnoxious guest who came every year," Dave Davies called to mind. "He would drink too much and pester some of the celebrities. He was becoming a problem for Bill Robson, so Barbara had to come rescue the director. Bill's daughter

was with him and evidently she did not know how to approach the situation. So Barb walked up to him, keeping in mind that she never met him before, and said, 'Mr. Robson, Jay Hickerson would like to speak with you for a moment.' After she pulled him

away he asked, 'Okay, what does he want?' And Barbara said, 'Nothing. I figured you needed to get away from that guy.' And he said, holding his hand up in the air, 'Bless you, my child.'"



OCTOBER 22-23, 1986

IN 1986, THE DAVE WARREN PLAYERS MADE THEIR FIRST OF MANY PERFORMANCES. A friendly man who had a smile as large as his heart, he would ultimately establish the first entirely fan-based repertory radio acting company, which would contribute to the stage annually for many years. As explained by Gary Yogg in the 30th Anniversary Program Guide, at one of the earliest FOTR gatherings,

held in Connecticut, Warren attended a workshop on radio acting and, shortly thereafter, established his repertory group with the encouragement and support of OTR enthusiasts Jack French and Bob Burchett.

The first presentation was the historic V-E Day broadcast of the *Tom Mix Ralston Straight Shooters*, titled "Secret Mission." Warren, with a mellow, southern accent, played appropriate roles on stage, from Doc Long on *I Love A Mystery* to Senator Claghorn of "Allen's Alley."

"Dave had a real knack for casting the right voice in the right role," explained Yogg. "Soon there were well over 40 players in Dave's company. Dave considered you a member of his acting group if you made a single appearance in one of his re-creations." Among the performers were SuzAnne Barabas, Barry Hill, Ron Lackmann, Bobb Lynes, Bill Nadel, Carolyn and Joel Senter, Charlie Stumpf, Maggie Thompson, Barbara Watkins and Dave Zwengler. Warren died in March 2002. In recognition of his devoted services, the Dave Warren Award is given away annually by Bob Burchett at the Cincinnati Old Time Radio & Nostalgia Convention.

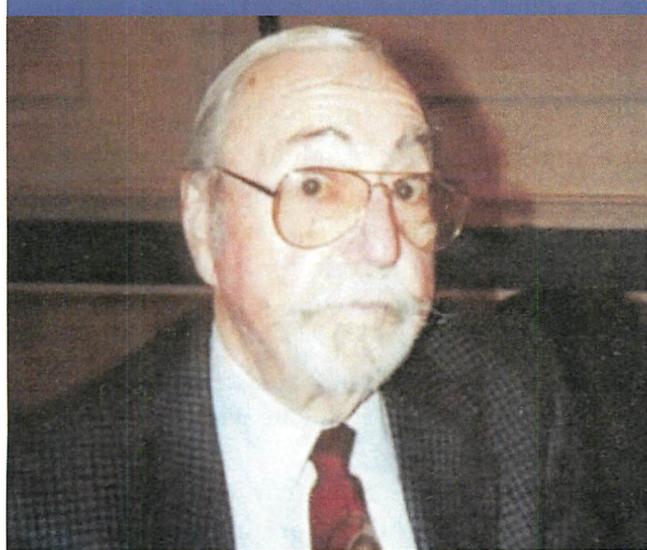
"Bob Burchett was originally inspired to do his Cincinnati Con by FOTR and thus there was a lot of crossover in attendees in the early years," remarked Steve Thompson. "Dave Warren was brought

in for year three to do the earliest re-creations here. He was a sloppy director, really, but he had an instinct that was on the money most of the time and an excellent ear for what just 'sounded' right. He also tended to be . . . shall we say . . . 'politically incorrect,' but I never perceived any malice in it. He was a very giving man who gave a lot of us chances and taught us a lot without even really trying. I've never been prouder of any award I've ever won than the Dave Warren Award."

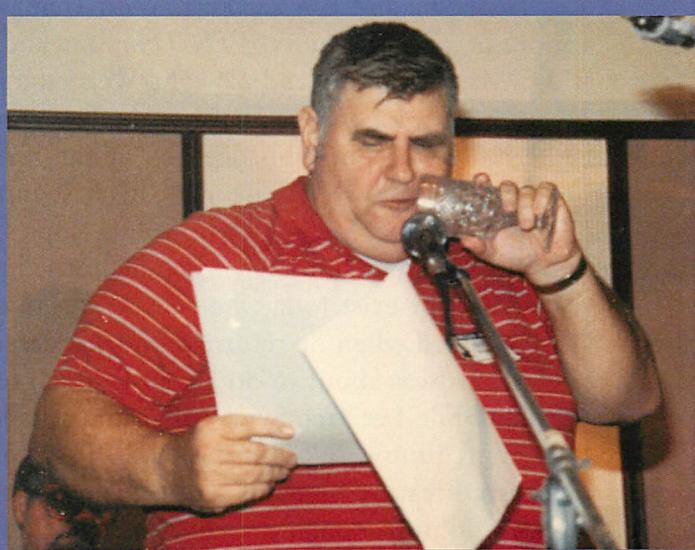
Willard Waterman attended from California and starred in *The Great Gildersleeve* with fellow cast members Shirley Mitchell and Louise Erickson. Ezra Stone reprised his role of Henry Aldrich for *The Aldrich Family*, with much of the original cast. Gilbert Mack entertained the audience with songs and patter. *The Whistler* was performed for the first time. Other new guests that year were Vivian Della Chiesa and Sara Seeger.

Beginning in 1986, Don Ramlow began videotaping the events. FOTR expanded the program guide (from a couple of sheets of paper) to one with ads, biographies and pictures of the weekend celebrity guests.

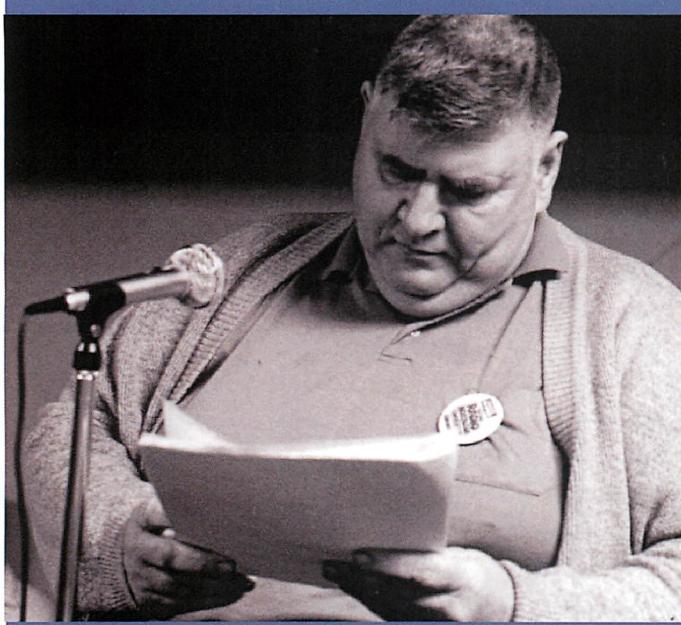
In recognition of the *War of the Worlds* panic, someone located some of the town residents of Grover's Mill who remembered the stir the program had caused, and they gladly shared their memories with the convention attendees.



WILLARD WATERMAN



DAVE WARREN



1993 WAS THE ONLY YEAR THAT *AMOS AND ANDY* WAS RE-CREATED ON THE STAGE. JOHN RAYBURN PLAYED THE ROLE OF ANDY AND DAVE WARREN PLAYED

THE CHARACTER OF KINGFISH, THE LATTER OF WHICH BECAME A TRADEMARKED ROLE FOR WARREN. LIKE MOST FANS OF OLD-TIME RADIO, DAVE APPRECIATED THE BASIC GOODNESS AND GENTLE HUMOR OF THESE CLASSIC RADIO CHARACTERS. UNFORTUNATELY, BECAUSE OF ITS CONTROVERSIAL NATURE (IN THE EYES OF A SMALL MINORITY), IT WAS PRESENTED ONLY ONCE IN NEWARK. THANKFULLY, IT WAS PERFORMED SEVERAL TIMES IN CINCINNATI. "DAVE WAS ESPECIALLY PLEASED WHEN HE WAS INVITED BY SPERDVAC TO DO AN *AMOS AND ANDY* RE-CREATION IN LOS ANGELES," RECALLED GARY YOGGY. "HE WAS GREATLY MOVED WHEN HORACE STEWART, THE ACTOR WHO PLAYED 'LIGHTNING' IN THE TELEVISION VERSION, CAME UP TO HIM AFTER THE SHOW, PUT HIS ARMS AROUND DAVE AND TOLD HIM, 'THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT SOUNDED.'"

OCTOBER 23–24, 1987

FOTR PRESENTED THE FIRST OF THREE *GATEWAY TO HOLLYWOOD* SHOWS. The winners of *Gateway* this year were Carolyn Senter and David Zwengler. Flying East from California were John Archer, Les Tremayne and Bill Zuckert. With Tremayne as a guest, it was a no-brainer to use his talents for re-creations of *The Adventures of The Thin Man* and *Young Widder Brown* (the latter with Adele Ronson). Fran Carlon, Mason Adams and Dwight Weist starred in *Big Town*. FOTR began giving donations to worthy organizations, a tradition that lasted a few years. New guests included Eric Arthur, Judith Bublick, Laurette Fillbrandt, Joseph Kahn, Joseph Nathan Kane, Elaine Kent, Joyce Randolph and Bob Steel.

"I remember when Les Tremayne made his first appearance at FOTR," recalled Terry Salomonson. "He was shocked to discover people were selling copies of the old radio shows and was not very happy throughout the weekend. But later, when he learned that if it wasn't for the collectors and vendors, those recordings would not exist today, he became a staunch supporter. It was amazing to see how much his attitude had changed when he returned one year later."

"Alice Reinheart was about to do a read-through of a *Thin Man* script," Bill Nadel remembered. "She kept chuckling while Les Tremayne was reading his lines. 'What's wrong?' someone whispered to Alice, 'Those lines aren't funny.' 'No, but Les and I used to be married!' was her reply."

Charles Stumpf featured a panel and trivia contest about *Fibber McGee and Molly*, one of his favorite radio programs. John Gassman presented a panel about *The Halls of Ivy*. Adele Ronson from *Buck Rogers* attended as a guest. Music this year for some of the radio re-creations was supplied by Joseph Kahn, who was the pianist for *Information, Please*. Lon Clark, radio's *Nick Carter*, shook hands with John Archer, radio's *The Shadow*, and Ezra Stone of *Henry Aldrich*. Looking back through the years, they agreed that

never once had all three of them worked together, but they were good friends throughout the Golden Age of Radio.

Beginning with this year, Barney Beck and Ray Erlenborn worked with Terry Ross on the sound effects. "I remember finishing dinner after a banquet and I went up to my room to drop off something and went back to the ballroom area," recalled Larry Gassman. "I was talking to Jerry Williams at the time and not paying attention to things that were around me. While we were

in the middle of the conversation, my hip caught the table in the corner of the room, spilling and breaking cups, glasses and plates. The noise was terrific. I remember thinking, 'Gee, what a terrific sound effect.' Later, when I told this story to both Ray Erlenborn and Bob Mott, their immediate comments were not about any injuries I may have collected when I bumped the table. One of them, maybe Bob, asked, 'Did you get a good recording of the crash?' It takes a special kind of person to ask that kind of question

at a radio conference."

"One of the things I remember was the time FOTR had a tent outside the Holiday Inn in Newark," Don Aston recollected.* "Mason Adams was the guest that year. He appeared in the tent with his wife and no one was attempting to greet him. Jeanie, my wife, and I went over and introduced ourselves. He was annoyed that no one had met him and was very pleased we came and introduced ourselves."

* "There was a tent outside the hotel, there for a prior event," recalled Jay Hickerson, "so it was used for cocktail hours."

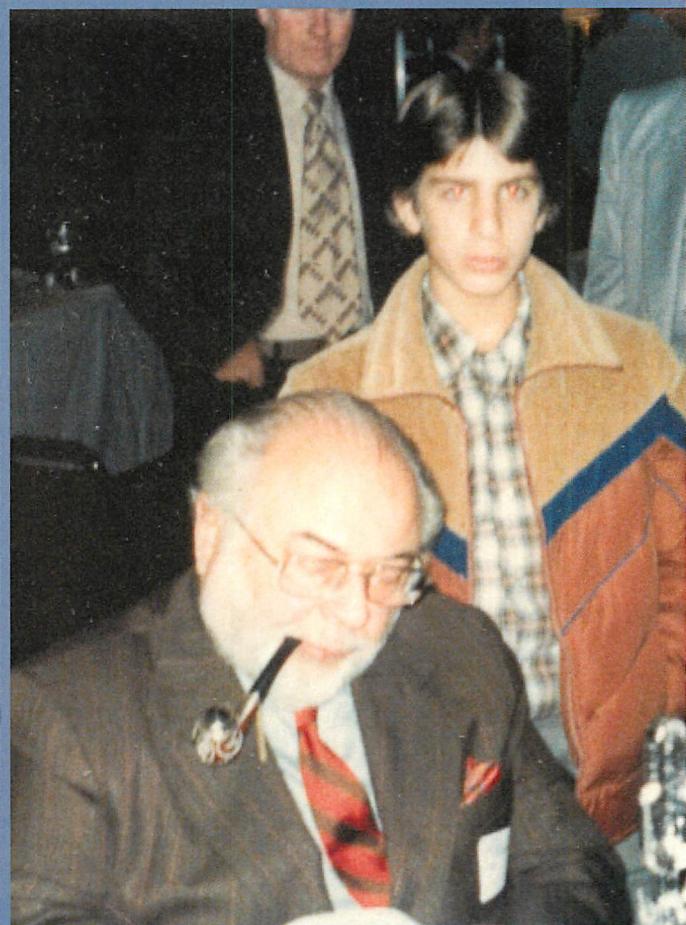
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RAY ERLENBORN & BARNEY BECK



LON CLARK



EZRA STONE

OCTOBER 20-22, 1988

THERE WAS NO MYSTERY ABOUT THE POPULARITY OF THE CONVENTION GUESTS WHEN CARLTON E. MORSE made his one and only appearance at FOTR. Beginning in 1988, the convention expanded to a three-day event, running Thursday, Friday and Saturday. An estimated 600 people attended the convention that year, the largest head count to date. Arnold Moss was featured in *Cabin B-13*. Carlton E. Morse attended from California and watched the re-creation of *I Love a Mystery* with Bob Dryden and Alice Reinheart. Also from California were Bob Hastings, Jackie Kelk and Richard Wilson. Jackson Beck was featured in another performance of *The Adventures of Superman*. Robin Fields and Bill Daugherty entertained the audience. New guests were Jeanne Harrison, Hildegarde, Robert E. Lee, Jan Miner, Larry Robinson and Joan Shea. During the evening festivities on Saturday, the dinner guests were interrupted by an updated version of "War of the Worlds."

The 50th anniversary of the *War of the Worlds* panic broadcast was acknowledged through a special panel and re-creation on stage. "There was a funny audience comment during the War of the Worlds," recalled Michael Biel. "When the section about Newark was on, somebody shouted out that we were safe because the Martians would never find Frontage Road!"

"Larry and I and Jerry and Barbara Williams flew in a day early and drove down to Grover's Mill, where the fictional storyline took place," John Gassman remembered. "As you would expect, Grover's Mill was doing its own celebration. We interviewed individuals in charge of the town's celebration as well as those who claimed to be alive and have experienced the results of the original October 30, 1938, broadcast. We put those interviews together with people we spoke with at FOTR and then aired a documentary on our radio shows which went from two hours on the evening of October 30, to a three-hour program."

"During the convention that Carlton Morse attended, he was asked by Dick Osgood of WXYZ fame what he owed his longevity to," recalled Don Ramlow. "Carlton looked over at him and said, 'I have way too much to do yet, I don't have time to slow down.'"

Carlton E. Morse watched a recreation of *I Love A Mystery* performed on stage. "We had Carlton E. Morse with us in 1985," Larry Gassman recalled. "In 1987, his first book, *Killer at the Wheel*, came out. He appeared on several radio shows, including the one hosted by my brother and me. Later, Jay Hickerson

called us and asked us if we would moderate a panel with Carlton, who would talk about *One Man's Family*, *I Love A Mystery*, as well as his new book. Well, the day came on Saturday, October 11. Carlton was surrounded, the room was full and he spoke and then answered questions for quite a while. Even after finishing his talk, the line of people seemed to never end. I remember him telling us later on that he was so very touched by the outpouring of love that came from that audience. He never thought that, 40 years later, his work would still be remembered by so many."

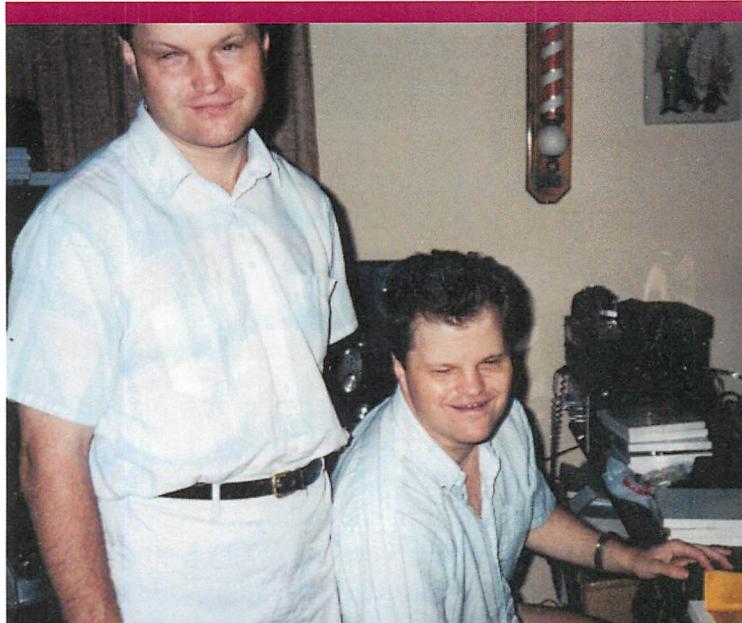
"Bob Hastings, on the first year he came to FOTR, was involved with a *Cabin B-13* re-creation on stage with Arnold Moss and Court Benson. Court drank a lot. Court was fine when



CARLTON E. MORSE

he got there, but, once he started to drink, he got blotto," explained Dave Davies. "During the re-creation, Court kept slowly leaning backwards as he was reading his lines very slowly and slurred to the point he was almost horizontal. Hastings was there and would keep pushing Court back up to a vertical position at the microphone. And then Court would start leaning again and Hastings would push him

back up. So after the re-creation was over, I introduced myself to Bob. I didn't know him then, but of course we became good friends over the years. I told him I was on the committee and we were going to have to give him an award for 'best supporting actor.' And he got a big hoot out of that one."



LARRY AND JOHN GASSMAN

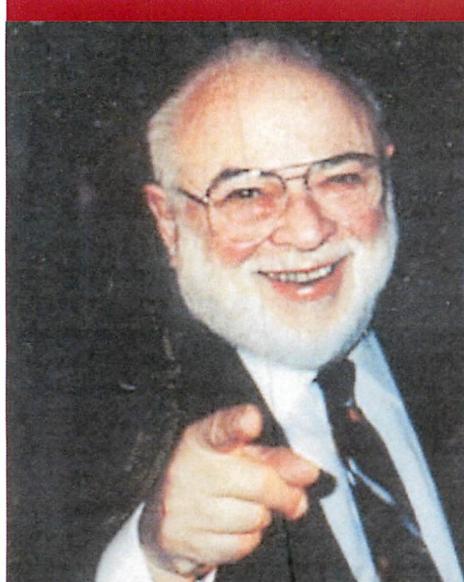


HILDEGARDE

OCTOBER 19-21, 1989

CHILD STARS WERE HONORED WITH A PANEL ON "GROWING UP IN RADIO." Participating were Ray Erlenborn, Charlie Mullen, Ezra Stone, Jean Gillespie, Arthur Anderson, Bob Hastings, Teri Keane and George Ward. Re-creations included *Nick Carter, Master Detective* with Lon Clark and Charlotte Manson; *Archie Andrews* with Bob Hastings and Charlie Mullen; and *The March of Time* with Arnold Moss and Dwight Weist. New guests included Lee Falk (creator of *The Phantom* and *Mandrake*), Earl George, Ross Martindale, Charles Woods and Margaret Whiting. Beginning with this convention, FOTR started inviting authors to attend. Robert Taylor talked about his book, *Fred Allen: His Life and Wit*.

Larry and John Gassman presented a tribute to Jack Benny. The Dave Warren Players offered *Duffy's Tavern* and *Tom Mix*. Raymond Edward Johnson presented a stirring reading of *Wentworth's Day* by H.P. Lovecraft. Jack French presented a panel on "The FBI and Radio." Lee Munsick hosted one about Arthur Godfrey. Lee Falk, the creator of *Mandrake, The Magician*, directed a performance with Raymond Edward Johnson among the cast. Charles Michelson, a pioneer in radio syndication, talked about radio drama today versus that of the past.



EZRA STONE



JOHN ECCLES & BOB HASTINGS

While attendees came from Canada as well as the United States, it wasn't until 1989 that the convention became international, with the presence of Barry Hill from England. Barry eventually moved to Ohio and returned every year as a vendor, often lending his knowledge of BBC radio broadcasts.

Barry was beloved by everyone and his untimely passing years later led to the largest number of benedictions to date ever displayed on the Internet for any individual in the hobby.

"Ray Schnitzer, veteran WQXR and WNYC announcer, never missed a convention," said Bill Nadel.

When someone responded to another person quoting the *Laugh-In* punch line, "Look it up in your Funk and Wagnall's," Ray and those with him laughed. Ray, you see, has been one of the editors of the *Funk and Wagnall's Encyclopedia*."



STANDING TOM MONROE, GENE BRADFORD, BOB BURNHAM, JOE RUSSELL, JOE WEBB & TERRY SALOMONSON

OCTOBER 18–20, 1990

ALTHOUGH JACK BENNY NEVER ATTENDED, HIS DAUGHTER JOAN made the first of three visits and talked about her father. *You Can't Take It with You* was presented on stage with Margot Stevenson, Abby Lewis, Ezra Stone, Rosemary Rice and Florence Williams. Other re-creations included "Dracula" from *The Mercury Theatre** with Elliott Reid, Richard Wilson, Arthur Anderson, Bill Herz and Burgess Meredith. Legendary playwright Norman Corwin directed "The Plot to Overthrow Christmas" with Burgess Meredith, Dwight Weist, Bob Dryden and Arthur Anderson. The first of a few variety type shows was also presented with "A Tribute to CBS." Sidney Slon and Bill Nadel discussed *Dick Tracy* on radio (Slon wrote for the series). SuzAnne and Gabor Barabas sat with Parley Baer to discuss *Gunsmoke*, a program they loved so much they wrote a book about it. Don Ramlow gave us a look back at *Suspense*, with Lucille Fletcher as a guest. New guests included Hendrik Booraem, Jr., Phyllis Creore, Betty Mandeville and Betty Winkler.

The highlight of the year was certainly Burgess Meredith, who participated on panels and in re-creations. "That was one of several incidents that stand out in my memory," recalled Gary Yogg. "When radio's poet laureate, Norman Corwin, came to direct 'The Plot to Overthrow Christmas,' Anthony Tollin (who coordinated all the re-creations at that time) not only asked me to escort Burgess Meredith, the special guest star, to and from rehearsals, but to actually sit in and read the part of Simon Legree during the initial read-through when Bob Hastings (who was to play that role) was busy at another rehearsal. I also remember that during the performance Burgess dropped his script and Ezra Stone, who was playing Santa Claus, calmly handed Burgess *his* script, while picking up and reorganizing Burgess' script. They hardly missed a beat."

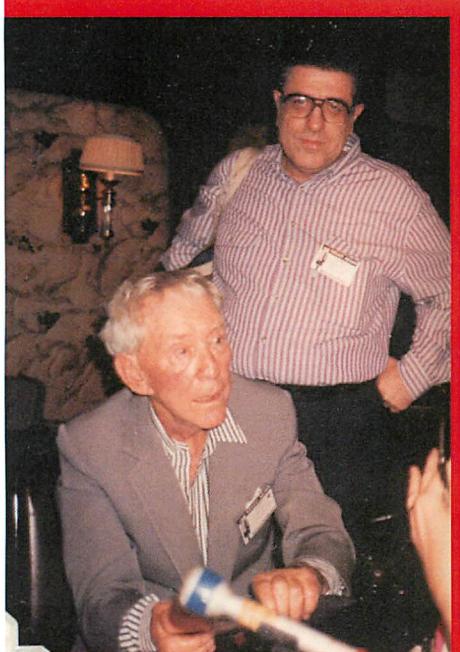
"By the time 1990 came along, that was my sixth con I attended," Alex Daoudakis remembered. "By then, almost all of the guests were child actors or people who didn't directly have as much to do with radio. Burgess Meredith attended, along with Joan Benny. Neither were really radio people. Both spoke very, very well and were entertaining. His claim to coming was he was a member of the Mercury Theatre, but for only for one night. He spoke eloquently about phases of his acting career. He, along with Orson Welles, were putting on a stage production called *The Five Kings*. He had a very big role. The play itself was a long one. No one knew how long. They had rehearsed by the scene, with no dry run from beginning to end. So on the night they put on the play, after an hour, they were only a quarter of the way through. So they ripped out pages and cut it down in length. Burgess recalled his one-time gig because the sets were on a carousel and, as the set changed, the curtain closed and the stage spun quickly. In his last moments, Meredith had to jump from the structure as in jumping off a cliff to his demise. The curtains closed, the scene rotated. He jumped. Because of the momentum from the revolving stage, he was thrown into a wall, and using his wrist to prevent himself from hitting the wall face first, he injured his wrist and was unable to attend Mercury again. But that wasn't the worst thing that happened that night. A sword with a retractable blade didn't retract when Orson Welles stabbed a guy. According to Meredith, he really stabbed the actor for good. The man screamed and slouched and remained there through the rest of the scene, bleeding to death. Meredith said they eventually put a spotlight on Orson so stagehands in black could pull the guy off, and later Welles remarked, 'My God, I think the guy peed on me. I'm all wet.' Meredith said later that night he did see Orson drunk, scared to death having heard what really happened."

* The radio program was actually called *First Person Singular* when broadcast in the summer of 1938. It was later changed to *The Mercury Theatre on the Air*.

Of the 26 FOTR Conventions I attended, Burgess was a speaker that left the biggest memory for me."

"I remember I got off the elevator on the 9th floor and Burgess Meredith was slowly wandering in the hall, looking for his room," recalled Don Aston. "I made a phone call from my room and

found out he was on the 4th floor. I took him there. That night this frail old actor was given a part in a re-creation. What a change came over him when he was given a script. He became positive, aggressive, clear headed and a complete opposite of what I met in the hall."



BURGESS MEREDITH



ED HERLIHY

OCTOBER 24-26, 1991

BEGINNING IN 1991, THE CONVENTION STARTED AT 2 P.M. ON THURSDAY. Dave Zwengler presented the first of several quiz shows this year. Performances included *The Bickersons* with Shirley Mitchell and Sam Edwards; *Buck Rogers* with Adele Ronson; *Ethel and Albert* with Peg Lynch and Bob Dryden; *The FBI in Peace and War* with George Petrie and John Archer; *The Great Gildersleeve* with Willard Waterman, Shirley Mitchell and Louise Erickson; *Gunsmoke* with Jackson Beck as Matt Dillon and Parley Baer as Chester. Ray Kemper provided the sound patterns. Other new guests included Harry Bartell, Bob Bell, Vivian Block, Oscar Brand, Bob Bruce, Lillian Buyeff, Harry Fleetwood, Ruth Last, Tyler McVey and Francis von Bernhardi.

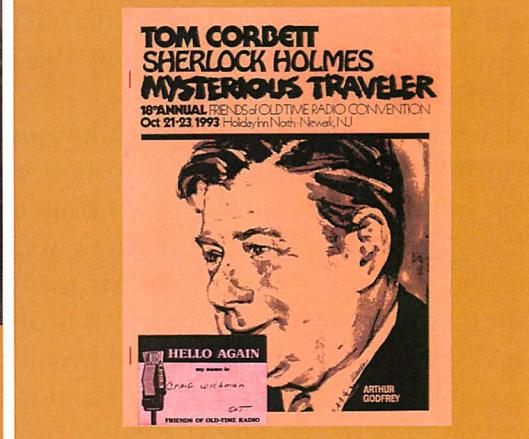
"I recall a story when George Petrie was vehement," remarked Bill Nadel. "I can't read these crappy lines. No radio writer would have written this and no actor would read this," remarked Petrie, in the midst of a run-through of *The FBI in Peace and War*. Barney Beck, ace sound-effects man, responded, 'Then, George, write the way you want, but leave the cue lines in place.' Petrie did just that, even though it had been the exact same script that he had done decades before and the recording of Petrie clearly had him doing the questionable lines. Barney turned around and whispered to me, 'I did say it was a bad script!'"

"For the 16th annual convention, I led a panel on Radio Traitors with script writer Margaret Blair discussing Axis Sally and historian Russell Warren Howe talking about Tokyo Rose," recalled Jack French. "Both of them were new to OTR and quite amazed at the number of dedicated fans in our hobby."



SHIRLEY MITCHELL & WILLARD WATERMAN

DURING THE EARLY YEARS OF FOTR, THE PROGRAM GUIDE WAS JUST TWO 8 1/2" X 11" PAGES, FOLDED IN HALF. THE GUIDE LISTED CELEBRITIES THAT ATTENDED PAST CONVENTIONS, A SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AND A LIST OF THE PRESENT YEAR'S GUESTS. THERE WERE USUALLY TWO, AND SOMETIMES THREE, PRESENTATIONS GOING ON AT THE SAME TIME AND ATTENDEES HAD THEIR CHOICE. THROUGHOUT THE 1990s, THE NUMBER OF PRESENTATIONS DROPPED FROM TWO OR THREE PER TIME SLOT TO ONLY ONE, NEARLY ALWAYS HELD IN THE BALLROOM. THE REMAINDER OF THE ROOMS WERE DEVOTED TO REHEARSALS AND READINGS. THE PROGRAM GUIDE EXPANDED IN SIZE, EVENTUALLY TOTALING SOME 30 PAGES IN LENGTH. BESIDES ACTING ON STAGE, DAVE WARREN WAS ALSO A GIFTED ARTIST, AND HIS WORK BEGAN APPEARING ON THE COVER OF EACH GUIDE.



OCTOBER 21-24, 1992

BEGINNING IN 1992, THE CONVENTION BEGAN ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, launched with wine and cheese for the overnight guests who arrived early because they were there for the entire weekend. This tradition remained through 2011, when FOTR came to a close. "We always provided complimentary muffins, Danish and coffee in the mornings, plus hors d'oeuvres on Thursday, Friday and Saturday during the cocktail hour," Jay Hickerson said. Dealers' hours were extended, and they could now open at 9 a.m. on Thursday. The expansion was necessary for the continued attendance figures that flocked in a day or two early.

"We started having children of performers give a special presentation Thursday evenings," recalled Jay Hickerson. Chris Costello, Bud Abbott, Jr., and Paddy Costello Humphreys attended. Re-creations included *Archie Andrews* with Bob Hastings and Hal Stone; *Detective Story Magazine Hour* with Adele Ronson, Dick Osgood, Ken Roberts and Lon Clark; *Inner Sanctum Mystery* with Raymond Edward

Johnson; and John Rayburn presented his first of many spoonerisms. New guests present were Dick Beals, Vanessa Brown, Fred Collins, Win Elliot, Don Hastings, Corinne Orr, Eleanor Phelps, Clive Rice, Anne Sargent.

"Adele Ronson and Jackson Beck traveled back to Manhattan in the same cab," Bill Nadel recollects. "They lived only a few blocks apart on the East Side. Usually Kevin Scullin went along with them. We nicknamed that cab 'The Bawdy Cab' because, at the urging of Jackson, dirty joke after dirty joke would be told. At first Adele would feign innocence — but then she would join in, and it's a wonder that the cab ever made it back to the Big Apple in one piece!"

"Dick Beals' story of his first *Lone Ranger* broadcast, during which the stepstool he used at the microphone was knocked over just prior to the opening theme, was a great highlight," recalled Sean Dougherty. "How many other actors could deliver a dramatic scene held up by the armpits by his co-stars?"

Clive Rice and Ivan Cury, both known as Bobby Benson over WOR, sat on the stage and talked with Jack French about the *Bobby Benson* program. Mary Jane Mastapeter, Herb Rice's secretary and the chaperone for "Bobby" on his many personal appearances across the country, was also on the panel. Dick Hayes and Raymond Wood presented a panel about Kate Smith. Don Ramlow did a re-creation of *X Minus One's* "Chain of Command," in what might have been the first science-fiction

performance for the convention. Herb Ellis, Harry Bartell and Peggy Webber starred in *Dragnet*. Gary Yogg directed and later hosted a panel with the cast. The Dave Warren Players offered their take on *It Pays to Be Ignorant*, which ensured a room full of laughter. Raymond Edward Johnson presented "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" and "The Raven," then reprised his role as a horror host for *Inner Sanctum Mystery*.

"They literally wheeled Johnson in on a hospital bed with IV's attached," recalled Michael Biel. "He did a reading that was at least 20 minutes long with all of us huddled around the bed. On the surface it would seem morbid. Here was this elderly horror show host literally on his deathbed giving a performance of Poe. His nurse explained to us that this performance was the most important thing for him and knowing he was going to perform at FOTR literally kept him alive. Later that evening he was there at the banquet, still in his bed, being fed by his nurse."

"I missed the whole banquet and show one year because someone had to drive Raymond Edward Johnson home," recalled Max Schmid. "Ray was already unable to walk due to multiple sclerosis, so Jack Shugg drove and we both slid him up on a ramp into the car and back into his bed at home. That year we made a friend of Ray, and later went back to his house where we recorded him reading as many of his stories as we could in a day. I should add that Ray was the sweetest, most loving man I have ever met. At the convention, all of the kids



RAYMOND EDWARD JOHNSON

would gather around his gurney to talk to him. He was usually in front of the registration desk on his bed with a circle of fans around him."

"I think this was my very first convention, as a Saturday Dealers Room buyer and trader (and

what a garden of earthly delights that was!). I was greeted at the desk by the man himself, Jay Hickerson," recalled Craig Wichman. "And then getting the chance to meet folks you'd only known by mail: Fred Berney, Ed Carr, Art Pierce, Andy Blatt (not

to mention WBAI's "Golden Age" other half, Jack Shugg). I was blessed to have been a part of FOTR for nearly 20 years, first as fan and then as performer. My fondest memories will always be of the many human moments of those October days in Newark."



CORRINE ORR



JACKSON BECK, KEVIN SCULLIN & KEN ROBERTS

OCTOBER 21–23, 1993

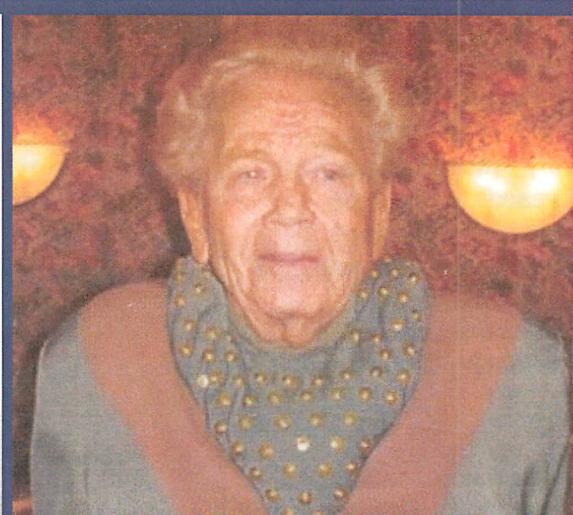
ABOUT 700 PEOPLE ATTENDED THE CONVENTION. Performances included *Doc Savage* with Fred Foy and Earl George; *Sherlock Holmes* with Frankie Thomas and Earl George; *Tom Corbett* with the original cast, including Frankie Thomas, Jan Merlin, Ed Bryce, Al Markim, Jackson Beck and George Gould; and *The Mysterious Traveler* rode onto the stage. Other new guests included Elaine Hyman, Florence James, Maxine Marx, and Lucile Mason.

"We met Frankie Thomas on an elevator," Dick Olday recounted. "I asked him about his role in the Nancy Drew movies, specifically about the time they were throwing milk cans. I asked if they were props and he said no. They really hurt if you were hit by them."

With international attendees, it seemed only fitting that Penny Fabb, Barry Hill and Tom Monroe talk about BBC science-fiction. Larry and John Gassman offered a tribute to Carlton E. Morse, who had died just a few months prior. The Boogie Woogie Girls of Company E re-created in full costume the best of the Andrews Sisters on stage, receiving a standing ovation. This was their first of many return visits to the convention. Al Jolson was honored on Thursday. Lee Munsick provided an Arthur Godfrey theme with two separate retrospective panels about Godfrey, and there was a gala reunion with all the Little Godfreys including Lee Erwin, Bill Murtough, Ward Byron, Sy Shaffer and Carmel Quinn.



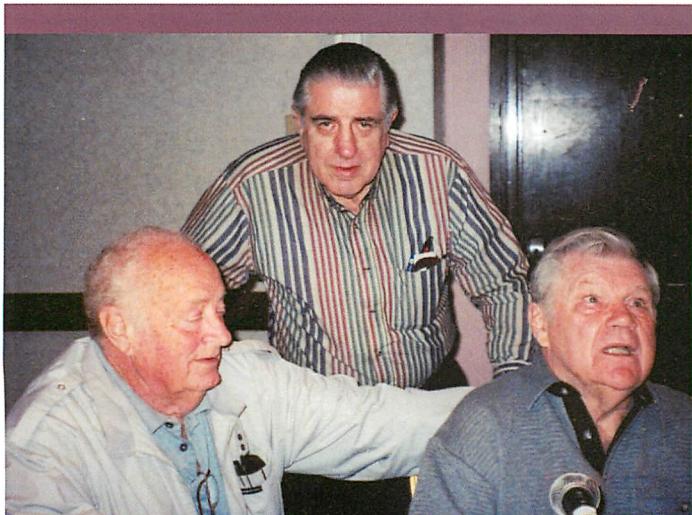
BOOGIE WOOGIE GIRLS



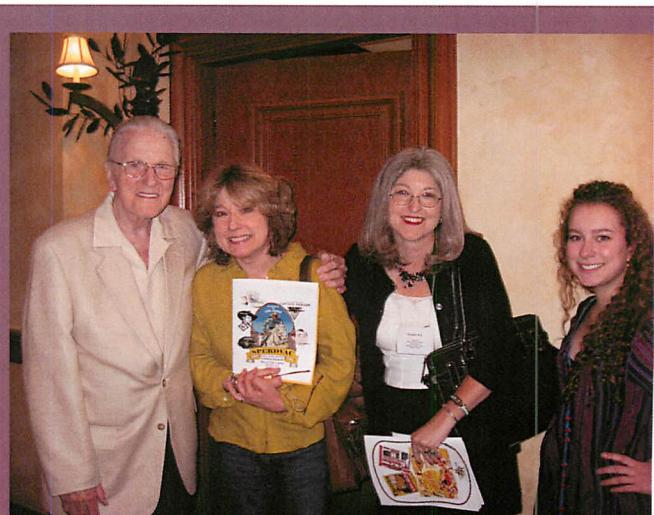
FRANK THOMAS

OCTOBER 20–22, 1994

“WHEN MY SON, BRIAN, FIRST ASKED ME TO JOIN HIM AT THE FOTR CONVENTION, I was reluctant, because I myself had never been on radio and felt that I was a poor substitute for my father, but little did I know that I would actually meet various actors who had, until then, been faces in my imagination,” recalled Janet Cantor Gari. “No one looked like what I had pictured! It wasn’t disappointing by any means, but surprising to say the least. I began to look forward to the conventions and getting to know the ‘regulars’ who would be there every year and the newcomers who visited each booth with great enthusiasm.” She and her son hosted a presentation about Eddie Cantor.



HAL STONE, DAVE SIEGEL, & BOB HASTINGS



FRED FOY & FAMILY

This meeting also brought the winner of the first-ever FOTR original radio play contest — Michael Giorgio, whose script for *The Whistler* was dramatized the following year. The contest was done every year afterward.

The popular Boogie Woogie Girls of Company E returned to entertain the attendees. Jeannette Nolan was among the well-liked celebrities. This marked the first year the Gotham Radio Players offered entertainment, staging “The Bark of the Dead Dog,” a lost episode of *Lights Out!* directed by Steve Lewis.

A re-creation of *Archie Andrews* was presented on Saturday afternoon with a cast reunion consisting of Bob Hastings, Hal Stone, Rosemary Rice, Joan Shea, Pat Hosley and Dick Dudley. A *Shadow* panel and performance with John Archer, Ken Roberts and Margot Stevenson was held hours later.

“Just as exciting as seeing the special guests perform,” according to Sean Dougherty, “is meeting them in-person, willing to share their time to swap stories of favorite shows and actors. At my first convention (in 1994) I was blown away finding myself at dinner with Rosemary Rice and Hal Stone. And I remember marveling at how Fred Foy could reel off that Lone Ranger introduction just like it was 1948.”



KEN ROBERTS

THE GOTHAM RADIO PLAYERS BY STEVE LEWIS

THE GOTHAM RADIO PLAYERS FIRST CAME TOGETHER IN 1991 as an offshoot of the Manhattan Radio Club when founding producer David Zwengler recruited MRC members to bring readings of old-time radio scripts to local nursing homes and community centers. They came together as an informal group of amateur performers who shared a common love of old-time radio.

One of the members of the Manhattan Radio Club was Max Schmid. Max was then and is now a producer at WBAI-FM, the New York outlet of the Pacifica network of radio stations, and for more than 20 years he has hosted “The Golden Age of Radio,” a weekly program featuring rebroadcasts of old-time radio shows. WBAI had planned a full day of live programming direct from the Nuyorican Poet’s Café, and Max’s show was in danger of being preempted since it didn’t fit the live format. So Max gave the Gotham Radio Players an irresistible offer: Come on his show and do a re-creation of a classic old-time radio script broadcast live, just like they used to do it in the 1940s.

It couldn't have been too bad because Max invited us to his show six months later, this time for an in-studio recreation of an episode of *Boston Blackie*. Ever since then, WBAI and the "Golden Age of Radio" has been our home base, with Max generously giving us access to his airwaves to perform shows as often as we are able.

In choosing the re-creations to do with Gotham,

I try to choose scripts of episodes that are "lost," shows that don't exist in recorded form today. After all, why reinvent something that already exists and which can easily be pulled off the shelf? It is much more interesting to perform a show that hasn't been heard in 50 years, allowing our audience to discover something new, rather than giving them something they have already heard before.



THE GOTHAM RADIO PLAYERS

OCTOBER 19–21, 1995

THE 1995 EVENT OFFERED A THURSDAY EVENING TRIBUTE TO BORIS KARLOFF AND BELA LUGOSI ON RADIO, with daughter Sara Karloff and son Bela Lugosi Jr. Friday evening featured a performance of *Arsenic and Old Lace* with Dick Van Patten and Gale Storm.

"I remember when Sara Karloff and Bela Lugosi Jr. appeared at the 1995 FOTR," recalled Bob Madison. "Both were babies on the set of *Son of Frankenstein*, starring their parents, and had fond memories of growing up with 'famous monsters' for parents. When I hosted a Q&A with them, they were surprised by a recording of Lugosi and Karloff singing 'We're Horrible Men' on a 1938 *Baker's Broadcast* radio show with Ozzie Nelson. Neither had ever heard them singing before. Both Sara and Bela showed initial mockups of what would become commemorative U.S. postage stamps with Karloff and Lugosi, which came out in 1997. The next evening, when Arthur Tracey sang for us, Lugosi turned to the table in wonderment: 'He's... still alive?' Later, at a special re-creation of *Arsenic and Old Lace*, Bela introduced the show and Sara closed it. Lon Clark, playing homicidal maniac Jonathan Brewster, who kills people because they say

he 'looks like Boris Karloff,' delivered a re-write of the original line: 'He said I looked like a cross between Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff!"

David Bakish, author of a book about Jimmy Durante, presented "Jimmy Durante on the Radio." Gary Yogg and Joel Senter discussed a taboo subject of sorts, titled appropriately, *Amos and Andy: Harmless Entertainment or Harmful Stereotyping?* Bob Burnham hosted a panel about old-time radio on the computer and a new thing called the Internet.

On Friday evening, a special radio revue was presented, a salute to 20 years of Friends of Old-Time Radio conventions. Excerpts using original material based on old-time radio characters including Fred Allen, The Lone Ranger, Bill Stern and Bob Hope were highlighted. The cast included Bobb Lynes, Lon Clark, George Ansbro, George Edwards, Ivan Cury and Bob Hastings. It was engineered by Max Schmid, directed by Arthur Anderson and produced and written by Dave Zwengler and Michael Giorgio. "It was ambitious, to say the least," recalled Max Schmid. "It was a series of mini-re-creations of different shows, all run together into an epic production. It ran well over an hour during the rehearsal, and needed to be cut down significantly before the show. I remember spending all of the dinner hour and more with Barney Beck in his hotel room editing the sound effects reel down to match all of the scenes that had to be cut."

"In 1995, we got Ivan Cury, Mutual's first Bobby Benson, to attend FOTR along with Clive Rice and had a panel which included their sound man on the show, amiable Barney Beck," recalled Jack French. "I had previously taped interviews with Clive, but this was my first chance to interview Ivan so I bought a new cassette recorder to make sure the interview would be preserved properly. I took Ivan to an unused room and cued up a 30 minute cassette. In response to my questions, he talked about his early days as a juvenile radio actor, his formal education, his family, and his broadcasting career on the West Coast, including his college teaching jobs and his books. We were both watching the clock and we ended the taped interview at exactly 29 and a half minutes. When I turned off the tape recorder, Ivan said, 'Well, let's have a sound check and make sure we got it.' 'Don't worry,' I said, 'I know what I'm doing; I got it all.' He

replied with a smile, 'I've been in this business a long time so I know you always check the sound when you're done.' 'All right,' I grudgingly agreed and reversed the tape to the beginning and then hit play. Then we both frowned as we heard five minutes of silence. I sped the tape forward, still nothing. I ran the whole thing through and found that not one word of our interview had been recorded. 'Well,' said Ivan with no hesitation, 'Let's do it again.' Apparently I had not pushed the record button all the way the first time because the second interview came out perfectly. I apologized to Ivan for my screw-up, but he was most gracious about the whole thing. As he left me, I thought to myself, 'Whadda great guy!'"

Rosemary Rice reprised her television role of Katrin and Dick Van Patten his television part as Nels for a radio version of "I Remember Mama," based on the television program, *Mama*. What made this re-creation unique was the fact that *Mama* was never a weekly radio program. Gale Storm took up her role as Margie in *My Little Margie*, done on both radio and television.



DAVE SIEGEL & GALE STORM

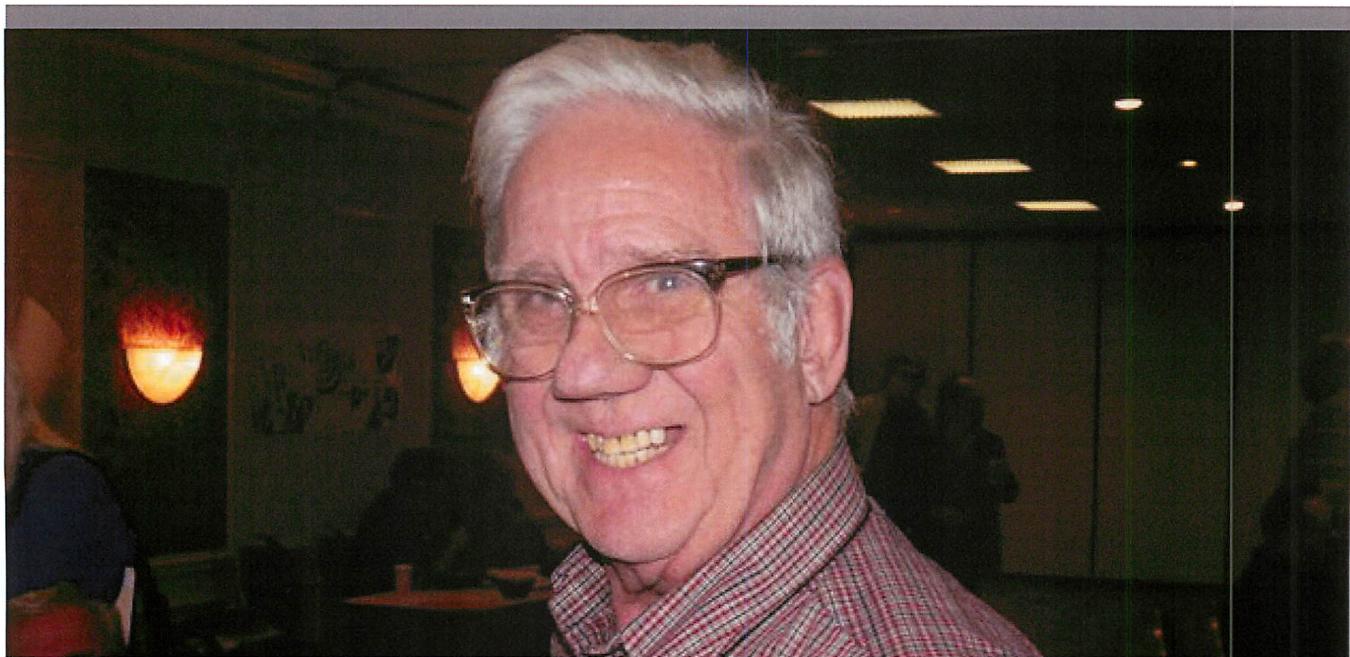
OCTOBER 17-19, 1996

ART SINGER PRESENTED *ARTHUR GODFREY*; THE MAKING OF A NEW A&E BIOGRAPHY PROGRAM. Michael Henry of the Library of American Broadcasting in College Park, Md., offered a fascinating presentation entitled "Archives and Museums." Bob Madison presented "Comic Strips to Air," which received rave reviews. Gordon Payton, known to a lot of people as "The Sci-Fi Guy" because of his serious collection of science-fiction radio dramas, participated in a panel about "Sci-Fi on Radio," along with Anthony Tollin and George Lefferts (*Dimension X* and *X Minus One*). Dick Dudley moderated a panel entitled "A Salute to NBC: 70th Anniversary." Participants included Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Fred Collins and Ruth Last.

With special guest John Hart, television's Lone Ranger, a panel concerning the WXYZ radio program was called to order, along with Jim Nixon's original radio *Lone Ranger* script, "The Wizard," featuring Hart in the title role. A re-creation of *The Lone Ranger's* 20th anniversary show was also dramatized with John Hart in the title role, with Dick Beals and Elaine Hyman in supporting roles, and Fred Foy as the announcer.

Jack French delivered a seminar on radio premiums and their values. "I was fortunate to convince Don Maris of Dallas, Texas, to join me at Newark," recalled French. "Don runs the annual Big-D Super Collectibles Show twice a year in Dallas that has over 300 dealers with nostalgia items for sale. His knowledge of radio premiums is extraordinary."

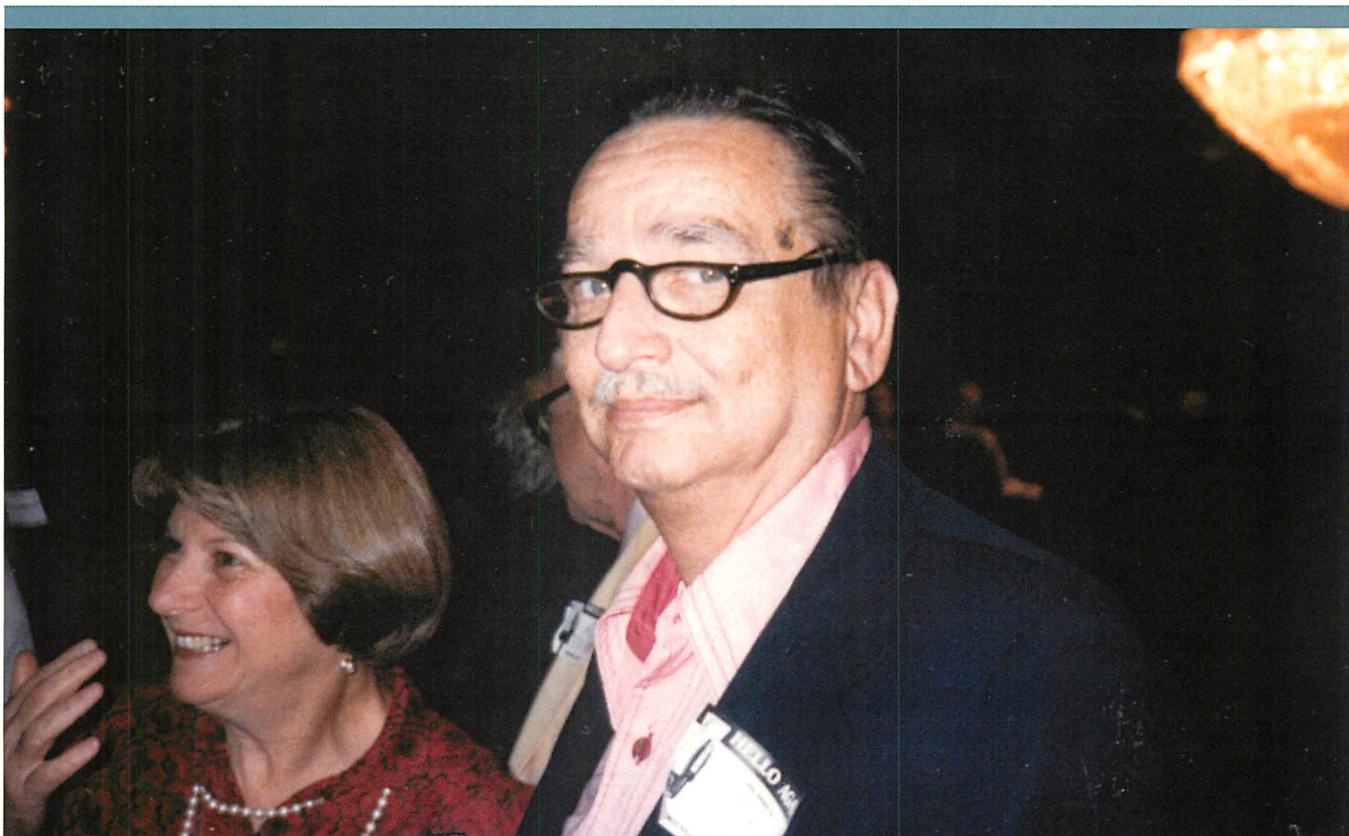
"One almost-disaster that year was directing the Orson Welles *Mercury Theatre* broadcast of 'Treasure Island,'" recalled Arthur Anderson. "Both Ken Roberts and Jackson Beck didn't show up for rehearsal. They had told the limo driver the hotel's name began with an H and arrived at the Hilton, not the Holiday Inn. When things were straightened out, they gave great performances in that wonderful Robert Louis Stevenson thriller."



JACK FRENCH

RAY STANICH AWARD

THE RAY STANICH AWARD WAS FIRST PRESENTED IN 1996 AT FOTR. Ron Lackmann was the first recipient. Ray Stanich died December 24, 1992. "Ray was a friend of mine without whose help I could never have written my detailed material," recalled Jay Hickerson. "Ray had access to various files and listings at CBS, NBC and New York libraries and used this information for his projects and others. Not only did he help me, but he also was doing research for John Dunning's revision of *Tune in Yesterday*. Ray's book about American entertainers and all the radio programs they were in was almost completed at the time of his death."



RAY STANICH

1996 RON LACKMANN
1997 FRANK BUXTON, BILL OWEN &
THOMAS DeLONG
1998 JOHN DUNNING
1999 MARTIN GRAMS JR.
2000 GARY YOGGY
2001 ANTHONY TOLLIN
2002 JIM COX & JAY HICKERSON

2003 HOWARD BLUE
2004 JACK FRENCH
2005 ELIZABETH McLEOD
2006 BEN OHMART
2007 SUSAN & DAVID SIEGEL
2008 ARTHUR ANDERSON
2009 JIM HARMON
2010 TERRY SALOMONSON

OCTOBER 23–25, 1997

SEMINARS INCLUDED “COLLECTING RADIO BOOKS AND MAGAZINES” by Frank Bequaert and David Siegel, “Three Decades of Collecting and Beyond” by Terry Salomonson, “Asians on Radio” by Jack French, “A Salute to Walter Gibson” by Anthony Tollin, and “A Salute to Big Bands and Singers” (hosted by Mike Henry). The latter presentation was so popular that it was reprised every year following. Included in the weekend festivities was a *One Man’s Family* reunion hosted by Mike Sprague and Ed Titus. Leonard Maltin attended the convention as a guest, promoting his new book, *The Great American Broadcast*.

A multi-media look at Herb Morrison’s recorded report was hosted by Lee Munsick, Bill Jaker and Michael Biel. “The 60th Anniversary of The Hindenburg” received rave reviews that year. Lee explained the difference between a blimp, such as Goodyear’s, and a dirigible, a class to which The Hindenburg belonged. He even had a piece of the frame of The Hindenburg sitting on the table in front of the panel. Mike showed photographs of the four actual discs recorded in Lakehurst by Herb Morrison and Charles Nielsen, which are held at the National Archives, and showed an example of a 1938 16-inch Green Label Presto disc such as the ones they used. Showing the close-up photo of the disruption of the grooving at the point of the explosion’s shockwave, Mike played the full recording of that segment from the “It burst into flames . . .” as is on the original disc and compared it with all the available recordings of playback on that part of the disc during the days following the tragedy. Bill Jaker, a personal friend of Herb Morrison, discussed Morrison’s reaction to the broadcast and his later career.

Raymond Edward Johnson read “The End of the Age,” impressing even the first-time attendees. “I had an amazing talk in the lobby Saturday with a wonderful man who just happened to be in a gurney . . . Raymond Edward Johnson,” recalled Craig Wichman. “He was very grateful to be remembered for his turn in Norman Corwin’s *The Lonesome Train* record as Abraham Lincoln, and from discussion of that great and good man, he expanded the subject to life, the cosmos, and his own deep faith in spite of longtime physical handicap. ‘God is the reason that we do any of this . . .’ he told me.”

In 1997, Kitty Kallen agreed to attend FOTR and be a member on the singer’s panel. Kitty’s career ran from the late 1920s to the 1960s. During that time, she had ten top hits, including the 1945 Harry James classic “It’s Been a Long, Long Time” and the monster hit of “Little Things Mean a Lot.” In 1954, she was voted the number one singer in the nation. “That was Kitty’s first radio convention,” recalled Walden Hughes. “Beforehand, we talked about whether Kitty should bring any of her CD’s for sale in the dealers room. I thought not, but that Saturday morning a friend of Kitty’s talked her into bringing them.

“We were late getting to the hotel because finding the exit from the highway to the hotel was a major challenge. The panel had already started with Betty Johnson and Dolly Dawn,” continued Walden. “However, when Kitty walked into the room, the audience gave her a warm round of applause. Michael Henry asked the singers to pick a song that they wanted played over the microphone system. Betty chose Kitty’s song ‘It’s Been a Long, Long Time’ and both of them sang the song together. Kitty interacted with the audience by asking their name and what their favorite song was. After the panel presentation, Jay mentioned where people could purchase the CD with an autograph. Kitty’s line was long and stretched all the way down the hall. She talked to everyone and signed autographs for 90 minutes. Because she was getting tired, we had to shut down the line. Kitty certainly made the right call in having her CD available for people that day at FOTR.”

Jackson Beck reprised his role in *The Cisco Kid* in 1997. “Jackson Beck was FOTR’s chief evangelist for many years,” explained Sean Dougherty. “He brought many guests with him and exposed the convention to others. His performance as The Cisco Kid at his penultimate convention in 1997 could still make the young girls swoon as much as his narration in a five-chapter *Superman* serial in 1998 put

you on the edge of your seat. A founder of the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists (AFTRA), whose efforts helped bring fair play and working conditions to actors in New York and around the country, Beck was an organizer at the Friends of Old Time Radio as well."

"I was introduced to FOTR back in the mid-90s by voice-over master, actor and legend Jackson Beck," recalled Kevin Scullin. "He told me that younger people's participation was needed to keep the genre alive, particularly for the convention, and encouraged me to accompany him. Bill Nadel arranged a car to pick us up at Jack's apartment building on East 86th Street on the Upper East Side; and, when we arrived at the hotel in Newark, I told Jackson to go on in, check in and I'd grab his luggage. When his room was ready, someone turned to me and said, 'You may take Mr. Beck's bags up to his room.' Jackson whirled around and in an angry, booming voice said, 'Put those bags down . . . Look, he's not my goddamn valet!'"

"I started going to FOTR in 1997 as an attendee and was dumb-shocked to discover how friendly the crowd was, compared to what I experienced at horror and science-fiction conventions," recalled Martin Grams. "Attendees and vendors were social butterflies, always talking about their favorite radio programs—and with a passion. (To compare, most horror and sci-fi conventions contain a large percentage of young kids who are anti-social, dress in gothic clothing, tattoos and need some form of spiritual guidance.) I returned to FOTR in 1998 as a vendor, convinced by Gordon Payton to sell copies of my first book, an expansion of a high-school project, the history of *Suspense*. Since then, I have never missed a convention. FOTR is my first love and, at my expense, I created one-page flyers and distributed them at other conventions for many years to help promote the Newark show. My annual migration to the event generated a long list of friends, evident when I do my Christmas cards every November."

"Perhaps one of the special moments occurred when I was selected as a winner of the FOTR original script writing contest, which was created by long-time committee member Dave Zwengler and judged, at that time, by Dave and Arthur Anderson," recalled Edgar Russell. "My script, 'Kiss



PAUL CURTIS, MAGGIE & VALERIE THOMPSON

AWARD WINNERS OF THE ANNUAL SCRIPT WRITING CONTEST

1995	MICHAEL GIORGIO, "THE WHISTLER"
1996	JIM NIXON, "THE LONE RANGER: THE WIZARD"
1997	EDGAR RUSSELL III, "KISS FROM A LITTLE OLD LADY"
1998	DONALD DORTMUND, "OUR MISS BROOKS"
1999	ARLENE OSBORNE, "THE SHADOW"
2000	MICHAEL LEANNAH, "DRAGNET" (PARODY)
2001	K.E. BIBEAU, "FU MANCHU"
2002	BECKY BEACH & JOHN BELL, "WAR OF THE WORLDS" (PARODY)
2003	JIM CORT, "MAITLAND AT LARGE"
2004	EDGAR RUSSELL III, "TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY IN THE AIR"
2005	MICHAEL LEANNAH, "THE LONE RANGER: MOTHER COMES TO VISIT"
2006	CHARLES RUSSELL, "THE CURSE OF THE BANSHEE"
2007	RAYMOND FAST, "WHO KILLED THE SILVER CYCLONE?"
2008	L. ALAN GUTIERREZ, "SEVEN HILLS OF PASSION"
2009	BRET JONES, "BURNT"
2010	AMANDA OSBORNE, "ONE AFTERNOON IN SECTION 37"
2011	MICHAEL MURPHY, "ESCAPE: KING OF THE BEASTS"

From a Little Old Lady,' was selected for presentation in 1997. Good fortune came in the fact that an OTR musical legend—Rex Koury (composer of the theme from *Gunsmoke*), whom I had met at a previous convention, agreed to compose and perform

an original, full orchestral score for the show. Rex was also invited to attend the convention that year and to speak before the program. The other great blessing for me and for many of the subsequent contest winners was that Arthur Anderson directed the show and

gathered an extraordinary cast to perform in it. Arthur is not only a gifted director but also a wonderful editor (along with his wife, Alice) whose sensitive suggestions made it a much better script."

OCTOBER 22-24, 1998

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Ethel Blume, Frances Chaney, Jill Corey, Shirley Eggleston, Florence Freeman, Toni Gillman, Carmel Quinn, Larry Stevens, Mason Adams, Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Dick Beals, Jackson Beck, Warren Bryan, Mary Diveny, Dick Dudley, Ray Erlenborn, Harry Fleetwood, Earl George, Bob Hastings, Pat Hosley, Will Hutchins, Ron Lackmann, Ruth Last, Peg Lynch, Bob Mott, Bill Murtough, Bill Owen, Elliott Reid, Clive Rice, Ken Roberts, Adele Ronson, Marlin Swing. The guests socialized with fans, participated in panels and workshops—and in seven re-creations that year.

"One of my favorite evenings was when I was having dinner at the table with Jackson Beck, Mason Adams, Elliott 'Ted' Reid and George Ansbro," recalled Kevin Scullin. "These four old pros were spinning tales of the old days and laughing so hard they could hardly finish their meals."

Toni Gillman presided for an hour relating many experiences. "Toni Gillman and her sister Lucy Gillman were very young actresses in Chicago during the early thirties. They both acted in some of the earliest soap operas in the country," explained Don Ramlow. "Toni's dad was a station manager in Chicago. He eventually moved to New York where he continued to work in radio and the production of various voice work activities. He gave Jackson Beck one of his earliest acting jobs. Jackson really liked Toni and they worked together on several productions. Toni went out to act on Broadway, starring in several major productions, and she also performed in numerous radio plays. She also acted in a couple of films and some television. Her main love was acting on stage and that was how I met her. I hired her and her husband, Gordon, to perform a stage production of *Love Letters* for my employer, the city of Portage, Michigan. She mentioned performing in radio in her bio, so I arranged for Mary and me to have dinner with her and her husband. We hit it off right away, and, since she and her husband lived in Cape Cod, they weren't that far away (so to speak) from FOTR. I invited her and her husband and they acted in many re-creations over several years. One of my favorite moments was when I reconnected Jackson Beck and her in one of the performances. She also reconnected with a good friend of hers, Elliott Reid, who also attended many conventions. This was a special moment for me also."

Highlights of the weekend included Derek Tague talking with Dick Beals, Brian Gari and Arthur Anderson about Radio into Animation; Howard Blue discussing World War II radio drama; Jack French telling about the Marx Brothers with Toni Gillman; George Ansbro, Dick Dudley and Bill Owen participating in a panel about radio announcers; and Jordan Young with Kathy O'Connell discussing his book, *The Laugh Crafters: Comedy Writing in Radio and TV's Golden Age*.

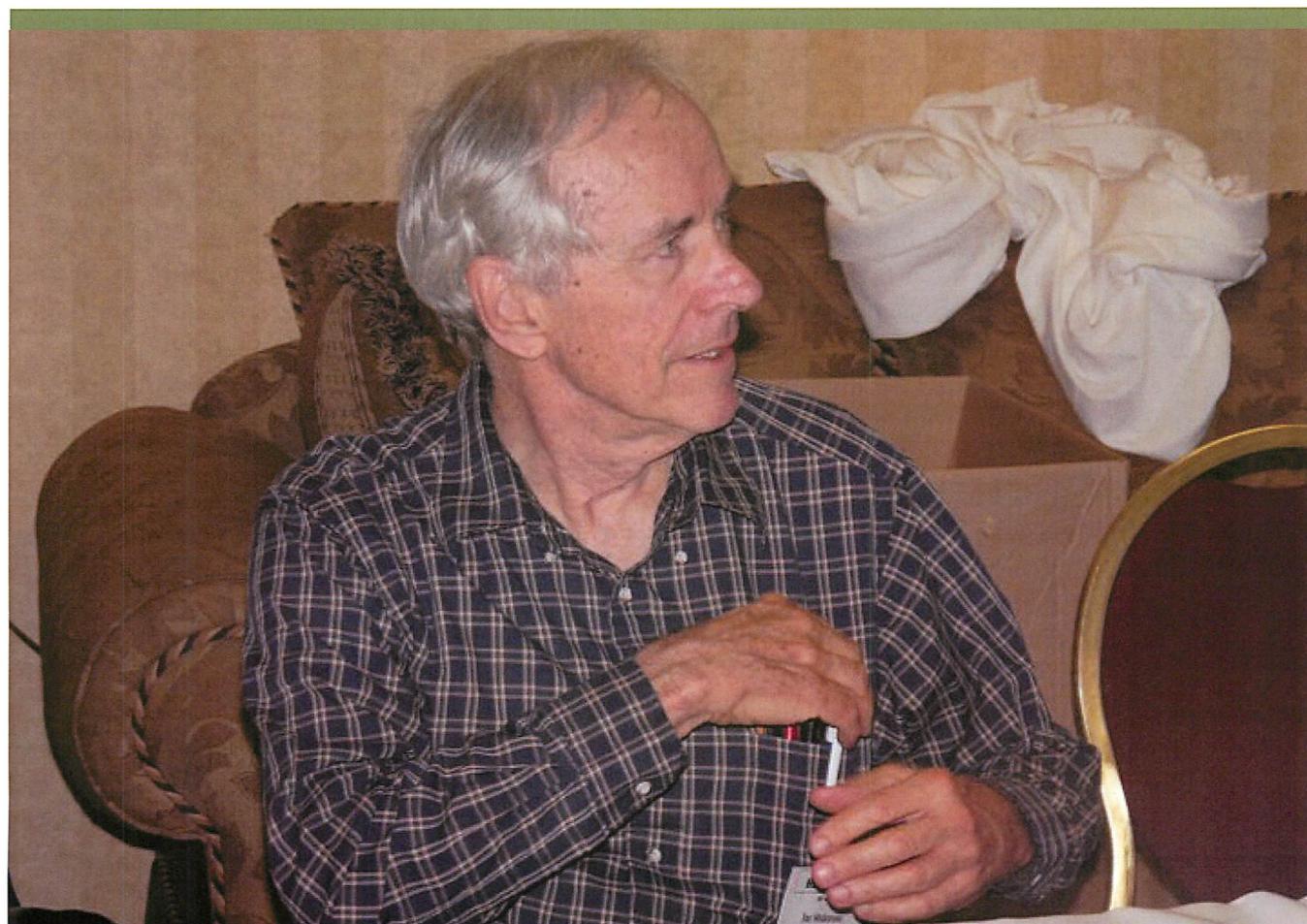
Joel Senter had his award-winning radio play, *Phil Harris and Alice Faye*, presented with Barbara Watkins and Bob Hastings. It was directed by Gary Yogg. The first of a five-part *Superman* serial was presented with, at different times, George Ansbro, Jackson Beck, Mason Adams and Dick Beals. The Gotham Radio Players, directed by Steve Lewis, presented an exciting episode of *The Adventures of Sam Spade*. *Candy Matson* with Toni Gillman was produced and directed by Donald Ramlow and Jack

French. Bob Mott, Ray Erlenborn, Bob Hastings and Karen Hickerson presented a sound effects spoof, "Sunbonnet Sal." The Ray Stanich Award was given to John Dunning for all the excellent writing he has done, especially his book *On the Air* (an greatly expanded version of his earlier *Tune in Yesterday*). Donations were given to the Veteran's Bedside Network, The Stephanie Joyce Kahn Foundation, The Broadcast Pioneers Library, WBAI, The Old-Time Radio Digest on the Internet, Yesterday USA, and the Heller Memorial Foundation of AFTRA.

Will Hutchins, best known as Tom Brewster on television's *Sugarfoot*, made his first of many appearances. Will never appeared on radio during its Golden Age. "He became a regular participant in OTR re-creations all across the country, showing great versatility," recalled Gary Yogg. "He was a natural as Dagwood in *Blondie*, and truly inspired

as the agent in 'My Client, Curly.'" Hutchins participated in a re-creation of *Blondie* on the stage that year.

"George Ansbro, long-time NBC-ABC announcer loved coming to our conventions," recalled Bill Nadel. "Not only did he announce many of the re-creations, he also acted in them. His last appearance was in a Sherlock Holmes, with fellow ABC announcer Bill Owen. George had even portrayed Mr. Keen for us in an episode where he had done the commercial wrap-arounds. However, his great dream was to get Florence Freeman (*Young Widder Brown*) out to one of our events. Thanks to the daughter of radio star Arthur Elmer, it surfaced that Florence was a member of the Elmer extended family. George was sitting in the bar at the Holiday Inn North when we surprised him. Florence and George immediately embraced, and the bar was filled with the glow of their warmth. The years seemed to drift away, and



JAY HICKERSON

here were these two great radio stars, reliving their past. Then George burst into tears and Florence and George's wife Jo-Anne comforted him as Florence sat down and joined them. The room was filled with joy for an unforgettable several minutes."

"In 1998 we were graced with the presence of Larry Stevens, the last major cast member of *The Jack*

Benny Program, who sang beautifully even in his late seventies," recalled Sean Dougherty. "A special convention memory for me will be Mr. Stevens taking the time to come to my table at dinner and sing 'Happy Birthday' to my mother, which happened to be that night. However, no singer who attends the convention will ever match the 1994 performance of

'Pennies from Heaven' by 'Street Singer' Arthur Tracy, who was almost 100 years old!"

"I remember sitting next to Larry Stevens during the dinner banquet," recalled Martin Grams. "He pulled up his shirt sleeve and showed me his wrist watch, which was personally inscribed to him from Frank Sinatra."

OCTOBER 21-24, 1999

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Catherine Byers, Ann De Marco, Paul Evans, Gordon Gould, Richard Herd, Russell Horton, Hal Kanter, Mary Small, Beverly Washburn, Robert White, Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Dick Beals, Joan Benny, David Brown, Jess Cain, Mildred Clinton, Gordon Davis, Mary Diveny, Margaret Draper, Harry Fleetwood, Toni Gillman, Martha Greenhouse, John Hart, Pat Hosley, Will Hutchins, Will Jordan, Teri Keane, Ron Lackmann, Ruth Last, Peg Lynch, Gil Mack, Jay Meredith, Corinne Orr, Bill Owen, Adele Ronson and Larry Stevens.

Seminars included Tom Powers discussing *Batman* on radio. Arlene Osborne's award-winning radio play, *The Shadow*, was presented with Gordon Davis and Toni Gillman, and directed by Arthur Anderson. "I grew up listening to *The Shadow* on my family's regular Sunday afternoon drive in my uncle's 1953 Buick," said Arlene. "While it didn't scare me, it most certainly kept me glued to the seat! Over the years, I kept a warm place in my heart for OTR and started a collection. Soon I discovered the Friends of Old-Time Radio convention and began attending, meeting more great folks who share our obscure hobby. Having written freelance for magazines over the years, when I learned of the annual script contest, I decided to enter a script based on my old favorite, *The Shadow*. At that time, there were only four previous winners—all male—so my goal was to be the first female to join the elite group. Being mindful of timing, commercial placement and plot, I wrote 'Death Leaves a Hoofprint' and mailed it in. When the mail brought news that I had won, I was quite pleased. But the wait to see it performed was harder than writing the script—a whole year! That FOTR weekend finally came and it was busy—meeting friends and attending the rehearsals of my play. Seeing it come to life was going to be great. Imagine my chagrin when during the actual performance, one of the pros ad-libbed a line completely out of character for the role being played! That was like live radio! I still remember it and cringe, although I doubt others will. That moment aside, it was a terrific experience. And it was the only time my husband ever attended the convention!"

Derek Tague then hosted an Eddie Cantor tribute with Brian Gari, Janet Cantor Gari, David Brown, Joe Franklin, Seth Winner, George Ansbro and Will Hutchins. Ed Clute with Arthur Anderson and George Ansbro presented two musical programs and sing-a-longs; Toni Gillman talked about sex in radio and television; Jordan Young with Hal Kanter talked about comedy writing; *The Lone Ranger* was presented with John Hart in the cast. It was directed by Anthony Tollin. The Gotham Radio Players presented a gripping *Witch's Tale*; Beverly Washburn entertained with reminiscences of Jack Benny and others (hosted by Mitch Weisberg); and a half-dozen actors told about their experiences on the *CBS Radio Mystery Theater* (hosted by Derek Tague, Gordon Payton and Martin Grams, Jr.).

OCTOBER 21-24, 2000

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING WERE Eileen Farrell, Art Gilmore, Al Schaffer, Johnny Western, Rhoda Williams, Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Dick Beals, Ann DeMarco, Gordon Davis, Mary Diveny, Sam Edwards, Shirley Eggleston, Barry Farber, Harry Fleetwood, Fred Foy, Toni Gillman, Bob Hastings, Pat Hosley, Will Hutchins, Elaine Hyman, Ron Lackmann, Ruth Last, Rita Lloyd, Peg Lynch, Bob Mott, Bill Murtough, Bill Owen, Rosemary Rice, Rosa Rio, Ken Roberts, Larry Robinson, Lynne Rogers, Margot Stevenson and Gale Storm.

A total of nine radio re-creations were performed, more than the usual number in prior years. Tom Powers and friends discussed *Doc Savage* on radio and then presented an episode on stage. Arthur Anderson directed Michael Leannah's parody of *Dragnet*; Johnny Western performed with many songs he sang over the years, including "The Ballad of Paladin," the theme song for the television version of *Have Gun-Will Travel*. He joined host Mitch Weisberg to talk about the Westerns genre. Max Schmid and Barry Farber reminisced about Jean Shepherd. Peg Lynch described her experiences in radio. The Gotham Players presented a "lost" episode of *Escape* titled "The Blue Wall." Don Ramlow directed a re-creation of *Richard Diamond* with Bob Hastings and Rosemary Rice. Anthony Tollin directed *The Six Shooter* with Will Hutchins and Dick Beals. The Hunterdon Radio Theater, a local New Jersey repertory group, performed an original production based on Edgar Allan Poe's *Tell-Tale Heart* called "The Broken Shutter."

"After the performance of *The Six Shooter*, Will Hutchins cracked a joke I won't forget," recalled Ken Stockinger. "You had to be there and I was one of the few people to hear it, but I was on the floor laughing. During the performance, a lady's seeing-eye dog kept looking up at the stage and watching the actors and wagging his tail with delight. After the drama concluded, Will leaned down and asked the woman, 'How did the dog like the show?' If you can imagine Will's delivery, you would have found this hilarious."



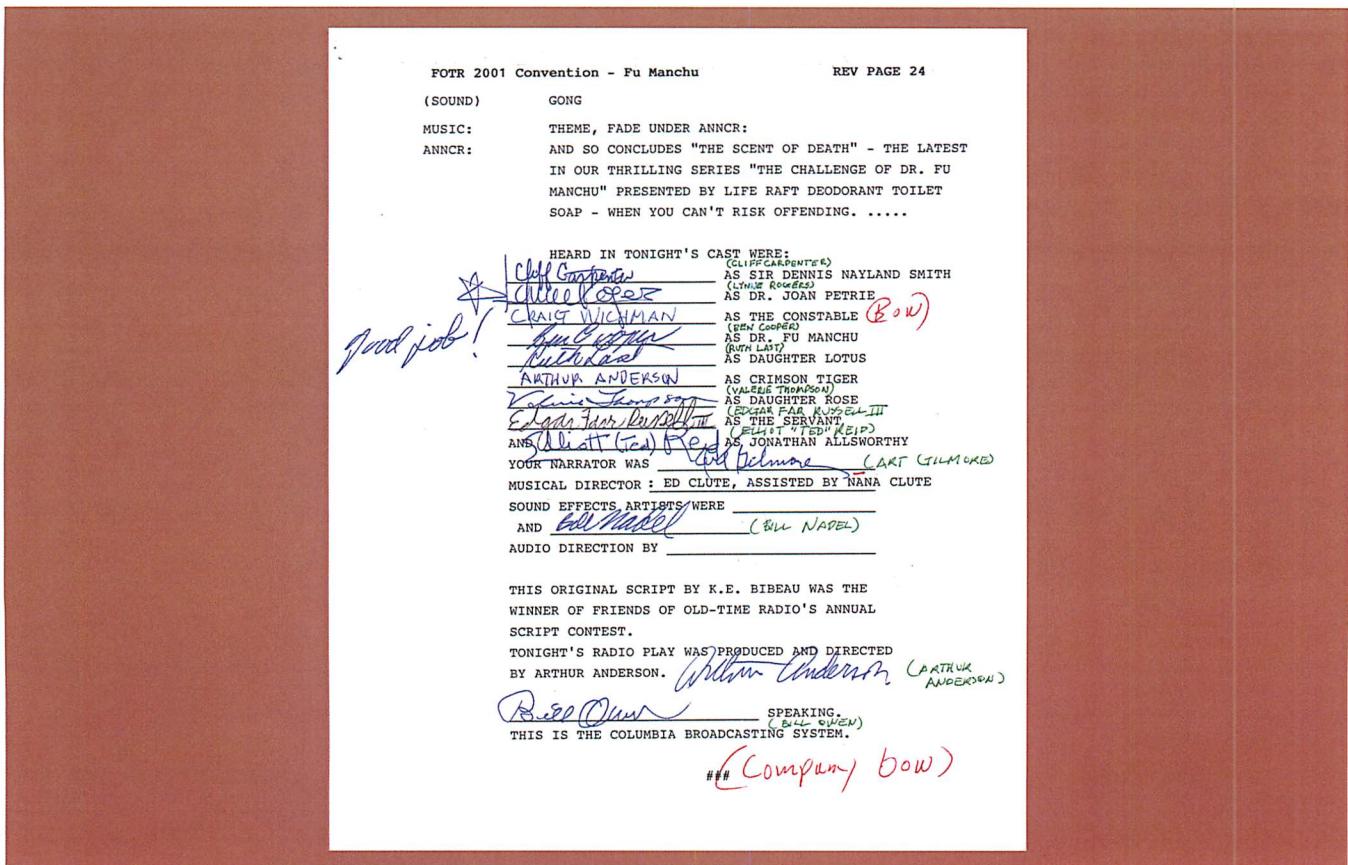
ROSA RIO

OCTOBER 25-28, 2001

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Russell Arms, Ben Cooper, Harold Johnson, Kevin O'Morrison, Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Margot Avery, Dick Beals, Cliff Carpenter, Mary Diveny, Harry Fleetwood, Art Gilmore, Bob Hastings, Pat Hosley, Will Hutchins, Ruth Last, Bill Owen, Ted Reid, Rosemary Rice, Lynne Rogers, Margot Stevenson, Gil Stratton, Jr., Beverly Washburn, and Robert White.

Tom Powers and friends performed an episode of *The Avenger*. Arthur Anderson directed K.E. Bibeau's parody of *Fu Manchu*. Ben Cooper reminisced for an hour with Mitchell Weisberg. Stuart Hample talked about Fred Allen and his book about Allen's writings. Robert White, accompanied by Joel Silberman, sang and reminisced about his days as a child actor and singer. "The Man Who Couldn't Make Music," a musical comedy, was presented by the Living Audio Repertory Company, a new ensemble group from New Jersey. Mike Henry offered a fascinating presentation titled, "Vox Pop Goes to War." Anthony Tollin talked about "50 Years of the Golden Days of Radio," which was originally supposed to be hosted by Frank Bresee, who could not attend. Arthur Anderson directed *Frontier Gentleman* with Cliff Carpenter and Will Hutchins. Sunday morning found about 100 people having breakfast and listening to an entertaining and sometimes very hilarious panel consisting of Arthur Anderson, Ben Cooper, Art Gilmore, Kevin O'Morrison and Gil Stratton, Jr.

"2001 was my first turn before the mike at FOTR, courtesy of dear friend Arthur Anderson's direction of an original *Fu Manchu* parody," recalled Craig Wichman. "In the name role, Ben Cooper chewed the imaginary scenery gloriously, and 'non-actor' Valerie Thompson was charming as his *femme fatale* daughter. Small memo to actors out there: Watch out for Elliott Reid. He'll steal anything in the scene that is not nailed down!"

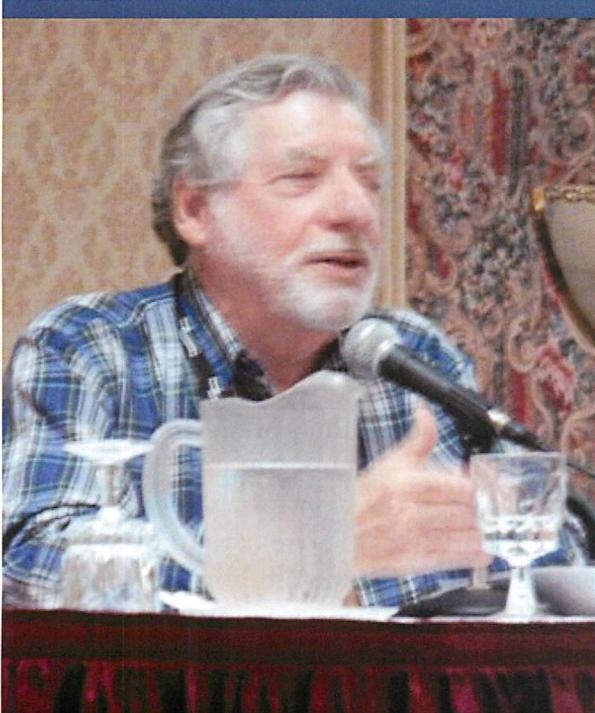


OCTOBER 24–27, 2002

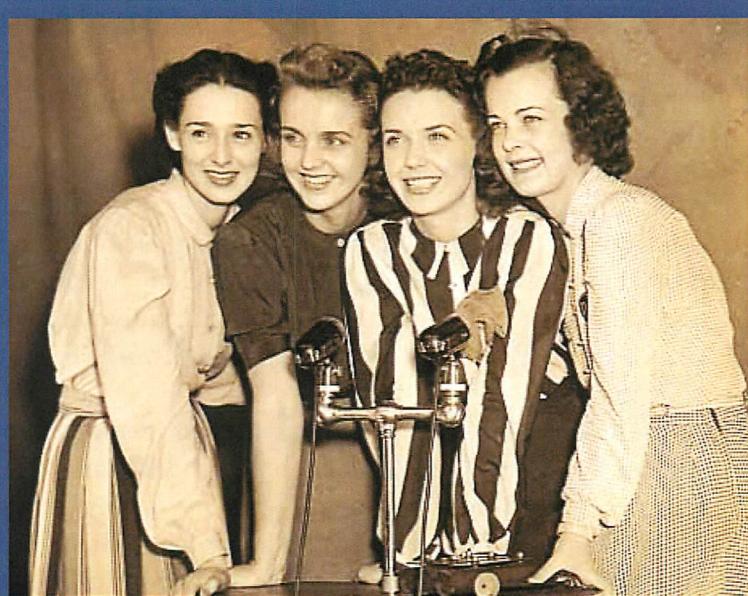
CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Robert Clary, Tommy Cook, Bill Farrell, Beverly Garland, Kathy Garver, Gogi Grant, Bill and Susan Hayes, Cynthia Pepper, Bea Wain, Johnny Blowers, Soupy Sales, Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Frank Bresee, Cliff Carpenter, Phyllis Creore, Mary Diveny, Pat Hosley, Will Hutchins, Teri Keane, Ruth Last, Bob Mott, Bill Owen, Rosemary Rice and Hal Stone.

Dave Zwengler (with Randy Larson) was interviewed as Archie from *Duffy's Tavern*. Fred Berney talked about collecting, tape recordings and mini discs. Howard Blue discussed his new book, *Words at War*. A tribute was given to Dave Warren, to whom this convention was dedicated; on the panel were Gary Yogg, Derek Tague, Bobb Lynes, Barbara Watkins, Bob Burchett, Jack French with additional comments provided by Charlie Stumpf and (via fax) SuzAnne Barabas. Arthur Anderson directed Becky Beach's and John Bell's parody of *War of the Worlds*. Those Were the Days Players performed *The Hall of Fantasy*. Gary Yogg with Ed Clute and Phyllis Creore talked about the AFRS. Laura Leff and Johnny Blowers discussed Jack Benny and, thanks to Rick Saphire, several of the child stars who were on *The Jack Benny Program* were present at the panel. The Gotham Radio Players presented the complete 30-minute version of "Chicken Heart" from *Lights Out!*

There was a Hedda Hopper panel with Jack French and Robert Furry, Hedda Hopper's nephew. Jay Hickerson had located Robert, and, while Jack covered this topic in 2000, it seemed fitting to offer more detail this year; Jack and Robert talked at length about her career in the movies and on radio. There was an *Ellery Queen* panel with Bill Nadel, Bill Owen, Martin Grams, and famous historian and mystery author Francis M. Nevins. The singers and musicians panel hosted by Stu Weiss and Michael Henry was a hit again; the panel consisted of Bea Wain, Robert Clary, Gogi Grant, Johnny Blowers, Bill Hayes, Bill Farrell and Soupy Sales. It ended with a sing-a-long.



FRED BERNEY



MURIEL ROBERT (FAR RIGHT), TERESSA HARRIS (FAR LEFT), VIRGINIA HARE (CENTER LEFT), AND PHYLLIS CREORE WESTERMANN (STRIPED BLOUSE). RADIO & TV ACTRESS PHYLLIS CREORE GRACED US WITH HER PRESENCE. SHE WAS ALSO KNOWN AS "MISS TELEVISION" AT THE 1939 NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR.

OCTOBER 23-26, 2003

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Paul Carnegie, Kathryn Crosby, Dori Anne Gray, Rupert Holmes, Jimmy Lydon, Betsy Palmer, Paul Petersen, Stu Phillips, Bobby Ramsen, Diane Renay, Julian (Jay) Rendon, Ira Skutch, Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Cliff Carpenter, Fred Foy, Bob Hastings, Pat Hosley, Will Hutchins, Elaine Hyman, Will Jordan, Teri Keane, Ruth Last, Bob Mott, Corinne Orr, Bill Owen, Cynthia Pepper, Joyce Randolph, Rosemary Rice, Larry Robinson, Lynne Rogers, Hal Stone and Beverly Washburn.

“I sat next to Diane Renay at dinner that year. Diane is a wonderful singer who had a hit record, *Navy Blue*,” recalled Mel Simons. “There was a big pitcher of water on the table. I filled everybody’s water glass. There was a little water left in the pitcher with many ice cubes. Being the klutz that I am, when I attempted to fill Diane’s glass, the water and ice cubes spilled all over her, and I mean *all over her*. She was not very happy with me. I wish I could say this was the only time this happened. A year later, Joan Benny was in Boston to speak to an audience of 400 people. She was wearing a light brown suit. Just before she was to speak, I spilled a pitcher of water on her. The entire audience saw me do this. Neither Diane nor Joan has spoken to me since. If there is a moral to this story, it is to never sit near me at a banquet.”

Arthur Anderson directed Jim Cort’s original script, “Maitland at Large.” Jack French with Jay Rendon led a panel on San Francisco detectives. “By 2003, my research on Candy Matson for my book, *Private Eyelashes: Radio’s Lady Detectives* had resulted in locating the sound man on her series, Jay Rendon, so he joined me on a panel discussing all of the San Francisco detectives. Backing us up on this seminar was Dave Amaral, an NBC West Coast engineer,” Jack recalled. “Both of them would later be very helpful in compiling background information on the West Coast shows covered in my book.” This is one example in which FOTR has been responsible for helping to preserve the history of old-time radio, besides videotaping the panels and interviews.

Derek Tague hosted a panel about *Dragnet* with Beverly Washburn, Art Gilmore, Gil Stratton Jr., Dick Beals, Anthony Tollin and author Michael Hayde, who wrote a book about *Dragnet*. Derek Tague and Mary Lou Wallace led a comedy panel with Will Jordan, Hal Stone, Bobby Ramsen, Bob Hastings, Charlie Callas and Betsy Palmer. There was an auction of various memorabilia related to the panel and it was won for \$300. “Hal Stone. For those lucky enough to have known Prince Hal, no more need be said beyond those two words,” remarked Craig Wichman. “But I especially remember a lunch where he signed his wonderful book for me and with quivering voice told of Lillian Gish’s kindness to him when he played in the Broadway tour of *Life with Father*: ‘From then on, she was always like a surrogate mother,’ he told me.”

In what some consider a brilliant idea to introduce youngsters to the medium of old-time radio, the Absegami Emanon Players, a local high school group, presented *The Shadow*. It was standing room only.

Fred Foy played the title role in *The Lone Ranger*, in a performance of the only episode from the series in which Foy filled in as The Lone Ranger when Brace Beemer had laryngitis. The re-creation was directed by Anthony Tollin. A *Lone Ranger* panel was conducted later that same weekend with Jim Nixon and Fred Foy. The singers and musicians panel was hosted by Stu Weiss and Brian Gari and consisted of Paul Petersen, Rupert Holmes, Lalia Madriguera, Diane Renay, Kathryn Crosby and Quinn Lemley. There was a surprise visit by Ed Rambeau and Bud Rehak, the composers of “Navy Blue.”

Baseball also played a part at FOTR, though not directly. “Until the baseball season got so long by extending the playoffs, the World Series was always played the same weekend as FOTR, with the deciding game usually on Saturday night,” Rosemarie DiCristo recalled. “Diana McInerney started going to the

FOTR in Connecticut, then stopped for many years. We both started going in 2003. I remember because the World Series was going on at the time,

the Yankees lost to the Marlins, and (oddly, I thought), 99 percent of the attendees broke out in loud, raucous cheering."



KEVIN SCULLIN, BOB GIBSON & BILL OWEN

OCTOBER 21–24, 2004

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Jack Bivans, Jane Kean, Louise O'Brien, Ruth and Ted Reinhart, Jean Rouverol, Robert Lewis Shayon, Elena Verdugo, Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Don Buka, Paul Carnegie, Cliff Carpenter, Jill Corey, Shirley Eggleston, Fred Foy, Bob Hastings, Pat Hosley, Will Hutchins, Elaine Hyman, Will Jordan, Ruth Last, Jimmy Lydon, Corinne Orr, Bill Owen, Paul Petersen, Bobby Ramsen, Elliott Reid, Rosemary Rice, Larry Robinson, Lynne Rogers, Soupy Sales, Hal Stone and Joyce van Patten.

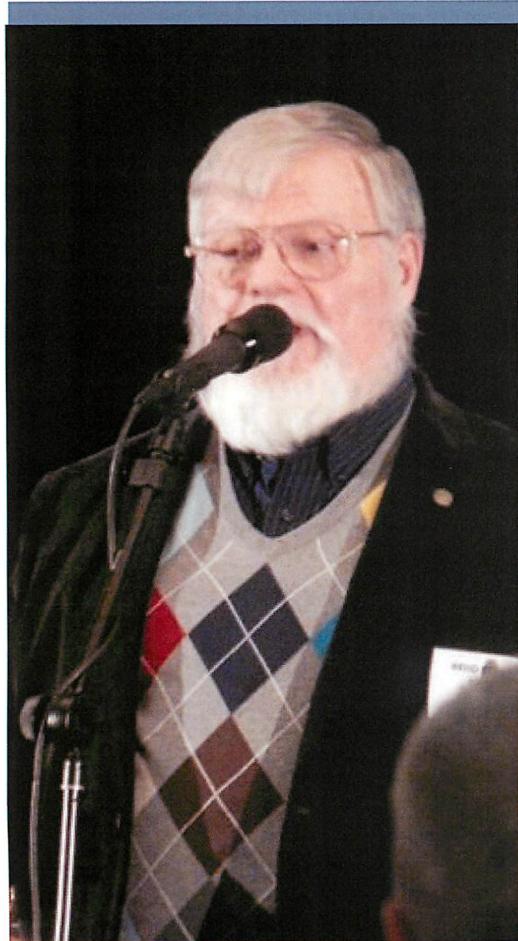
Hal Stone hosted a one-on-one with Joyce van Patten. Anthony Tollin and Jeff David led an emotional tribute to Jackson Beck. Michael Hayde and Derek Tague hosted an amusing presentation of "Jack Benny in Cartoons." Hal Stone and Bob Hastings were *Bob and Ray*. The Gotham Players gave an original presentation of "The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto" by Morton Wishengrad. George Downes led a panel of children's shows with Arthur Anderson, Bob Hastings, Hal Stone, Jimmy Lydon and others. Bill Nadel directed an episode of *Sherlock Holmes* titled "The Lost Special." After dinner, Anthony Tollin directed *The Green Hornet* with Fred Foy, Paul Carnegie and Elaine Hyman. Paul Carnegie played the role of Kato, which he insisted he did decades prior. A historian questioned this as fact, boldly in front of Carnegie,

but it was later discovered the actor was indeed correct. During the Saturday evening banquet, Fred and Ellen Berney received the Allen Rockford Award for their outstanding efforts in keeping radio alive, particularly for videotaping the panels and seminars.

"One thing I remember at the banquets was the evening I sat at the same table with Soupy Sales," recalled Martin Grams. "My girlfriend at the time, who I dragged along to the event, did not know who Soupy was. But here I was, at the same table, watching his nurse spoon-feed him. It broke my heart and watching Soupy in that condition was not pleasant. Soupy the television personality, as I remember watching him on television, was not gone for good. He was just reminding us that, no matter what the obstacle, there's still something to

smile about and look forward to."

"That convention was a very moving experience," recalled Craig Wichman. "I was honored to play radio legend Herb Morrison in Edgar Farr Russell III's *You Are There*, which earned praise from no less than that series' co-creator Robert Lewis Shayon. The story concerned an early Wright Brothers flight in which a relative of Edgar's had taken part, and it was presented before Edgar's own father's proud eyes. He passed away that very weekend. Then there was Bill Nadel's production of the classic Edith Meiser lost episode, 'The Lost Special,' and I got to return to one of my very favorite roles, playing Sherlock Holmes opposite Bill Owen's lovable Dr. Watson. The 'Dean of Announcers' George Ansbro was on board the train—a 90-year-old wonder as a Veddy British Gentleman!"



GARY YOGGY



PENNY, JOY JACKSON, JEAN ROUVEROL & CLIFF CARPENTER

OCTOBER 20-23, 2005

ATTENDANCE HAD NOTICEABLY DROPPED AFTER THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. With FOTR celebrating its 30th Anniversary in 2005, it was evident the head count grew for the first time since the violence. The Friends of Old Time Radio made headlines when it became a feature article in the Saturday issue of *The Wall Street Journal*. A new dimension was added when YesterdayUSA began carrying the convention live on the Internet with hosts Walden Hughes, Kim Bragg, Dale Litatich, Michael Biel and his daughter Leah.

Celebrities attending: Shirley Bell (in absentia), Larry Conroy, Sonny Curtis, Jeff David, Mickey Freeman, Susan Gordon, Michael Gwynne, William Herz, Jr., Simon Jones, Noel Neill, Paul O'Keefe, David Parker, Jon Provost, Arthur Anderson, George Ansbro, Margot Avery, Don Buka, Cliff Carpenter, Fred Foy, Joe Franklin, Will Hutchins, Elaine Hyman, Ruth Last, Jimmy Lydon, Al Markim, Corinne Orr, Bill Owen, Cynthia Pepper, Bobby Ramsen, Elliott Reid, Rosemary Rice, Larry Robinson, Lynne Rogers, Jean Rouverol, Soupy Sales, Margot Stevenson, Hal Stone, Frank Thomas and Beverly Washburn.

Brian Gari and Derek Tague introduced a number of cartoons depicting Eddie Cantor. Max Schmid interviewed Eugene Bergmann, author of a book about Jean Shepherd. Arthur Anderson directed Michael Leannah's original hilarious script, "The Lone Ranger's Mother." Jeff David showed a documentary of Jackson Beck. Jack French discussed syndicated shows. Simon Jones gave a funny talk about his experiences, and the Comedy panel followed, complete with pie-throwing in honor of Soupy Sales. "I humiliated myself by doing the Soupy Shuffle for Soupy himself and then letting him hit me in the face with a pie," recalled Brian Gari.

(7th seat right)

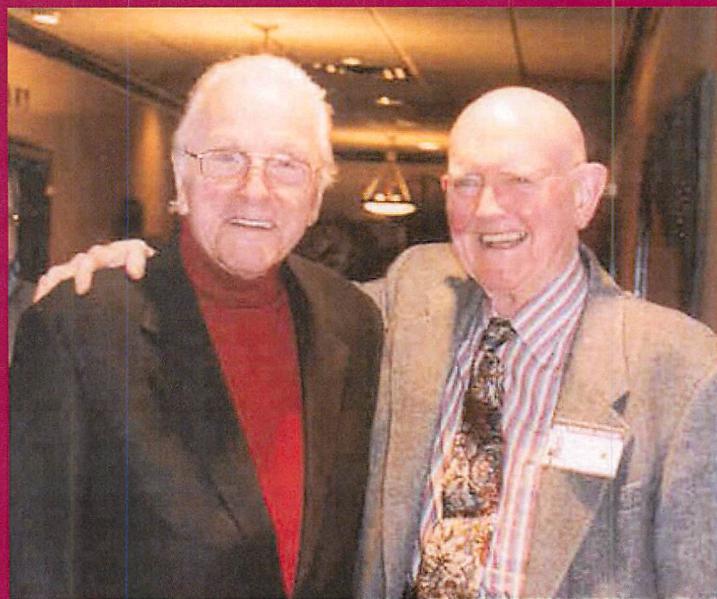
THE PLOT TO OVERTHROW CHRISTMAS
FOTR Re-Creation Oct. 22, 2005

Cliff Carpenter	Announcer	George Ansbro
Donald Buka	Sotto Voce	Cliff Carpenter
Hal Stone	Courier	Craig Wichman
Bob Lyles	Nero	Donald Buka
Ivan	Mephisto	Larry Conroy
WAN	Haman	Hal Stone
Caligula	Bob Lyles	Elliott Reid
Simon Legree	Will Hutchins	Bob Lyles
Lucrezia Borgia	Ruth Last	Jimmy Lydon
Santa	Jimmy Lydon	
The Violinist		
David Parker	Director/Producer	Arthur Anderson
Sound Effects	Sound Effects	Bart Curtis
Audio	Audio	Bill Siudmak

SEAN DOUGHTERY, SIMON JONES & STEVE LEWIS

Christina Britton Conroy, daughter of actress Barbara Britton, starred in a re-creation of *Mr. and Mrs. North*. The first of two episodes of *The Adventures of Superman* were performed with Noel Neill, television's Lois Lane, reprising her role. Niel Shell gave a presentation featuring his grandfather, Nathaniel Shilkret. Elizabeth McLeod talked about *Amos and Andy*, which was perhaps the most popular offering of the weekend. Gary Yogg saluted Orson Welles with William Herz, Jr., the only surviving member of the "War of the Worlds" panic broadcast. Jimmy Lydon showed a Fox Movietone Special. Anne Meara and Jerry Stiller stole the show on a re-creation of *The Joe Franklin Show*. FOTR also featured a moving, lost episode of *Dr. Christian* with a taped introduction by its prize-winning author, Earl Hamner, Jr. (later the creator of TV's *The Waltons*).

OCTOBER 22 WAS ALSO A MEMORABLE DAY IN THE HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO. NOT ONLY WAS THE EVENT CELEBRATING ITS 30TH YEAR OF REUNITING THE ACTORS, WRITERS, DIRECTORS, PRODUCERS, ENGINEERS, SOUND EFFECTS ARTISTS, SINGERS, MUSICIANS AND FANS OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO WITH FOUR DAYS OF LIVE PERFORMANCES, HISTORICAL PRESENTATIONS, PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND MUSIC, BUT JAY HICKERSON'S TIRELESS EFFORTS AS CHAIRMAN FOR EACH OF THE 30 ANNUAL EVENTS WAS, IN THE EYES OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, N.J., GREATLY ENRICHING THE PERFORMING ARTS LEGACY OF THE CITY. SHARPE JAMES, MAYOR OF NEWARK, OFFICIALLY DECLARED SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2005, AS JAY HICKERSON DAY IN THE CITY.



FRED FOY & GEORGE ANSBRO

OCTOBER 19–22, 2006

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Don Ciccone, Alec Cumming, Barry Farber, Sonny Fox, Noel Freedman, Celeste Holm, Peggy King, Rod McBrien, Malachy McCourt, Dick Monda, Kate Phillips, Rick Rogers, Leslie Shreve*, Nan Warren, Arthur Anderson, Cliff Carpenter, Christina and Larry Conroy, Jeff David, Joe Franklin, Mickey Freeman, Michael Gwynne, Bill Herz, Pat Hosley, Elaine Hyman, Simon Jones, Ruth Last, Shirley Mitchell, Corinne Orr, Bill Owen, Cynthia Pepper, Bobby Ramsen, Rosemary Rice, Lynne Rogers, Jean Rouverol, Soupy Sales and Hal Stone. This was Chuck McCann's first appearance at FOTR, and he would return numerous times afterwards.

Those Were the Days Players presented an *Ellery Queen* mystery with celebrity armchair detective Celeste Holm. Bill Nadel directed. Arthur Anderson directed an original script by Charles Russell titled

* Leslie Shreve spells her first name with a lowercase "l."

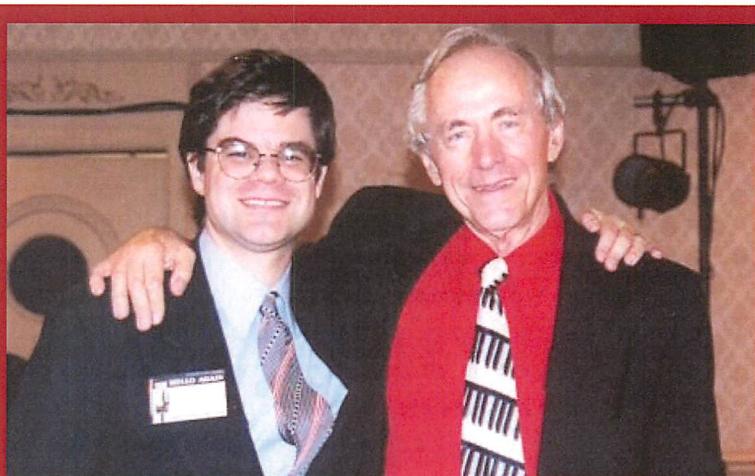
“Curse of the Banshee.” Ken Stockinger hosted his first of many presentations, this one about “Baseball on Radio.” Michael Biel presented “The History of NBC” with Alec Cumming. Dave Zwengler and Randy Larson presented “A Norman Corwin Tribute.” Brian Gari hosted a one-on-one with Celeste Holm on stage.

Don Ramlow directed an episode of *Suspense* titled “On a Country Road,” with Chuck McCann in the cast. The Allen Rockford Award was presented to Maggie Thompson for her outstanding efforts in keeping radio and this convention alive. The Ray Stanich Award was given to Ben Ohmart for all the excellent writing and publishing he has done. YesterdayUSA expanded FOTR’s audience with its live streaming of the entire convention with hosts Walden Hughes, Kim Bragg, Dale Litatich, Michael Biel and his daughter Leah.

A high point of the convention was the first-ever presentation of Shakespeare at FOTR. Producer Edgar Russell spent 300 hours re-constructing the script for the lost 1938 *Mercury Theatre on the Air* production of “Julius Caesar,” which featured two members of the legendary Orson Welles Broadway production (Bill Herz and Arthur Anderson). It was directed by Anderson who, as the character Lucius, also sang and played the beautiful Marc Blitzstein composition *Orpheus with His Lute*, on the same ukulele he’d used in 1938!



FOTR MOMENTOS



SEAN DOUGHERTY & JAY HICKERSON

OCTOBER 18–21, 2007

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Lucie Arnaz; Molly Bee; W Watts (Buck) Biggers; Eddie Carroll; Gloria McMillan; Marilyn Michaels; Mitch Murray; Simon (Stuffy) Singer; Bill Dana; David Whitehouse, Arthur Anderson, Frank Bresee, Don Buka, Peter Fernandez, Cliff Carpenter, Jeff David, Joe Franklin, Barbara Fuller, Michael Gwynne, Bob Hastings, Pat Hosley, Will Hutchins, Elaine Hyman, Teri Keane, Ruth Last, George Lefferts, Peg Lynch, Chuck McCann, Shirley Mitchell, Corinne Orr, Bill Owen, Bobby Ramsen, Rosemary Rice, Jean Rouverol, Kevin Scullin, Leslie Shreve, Gil Stratton, Jr. and Nan Warren.

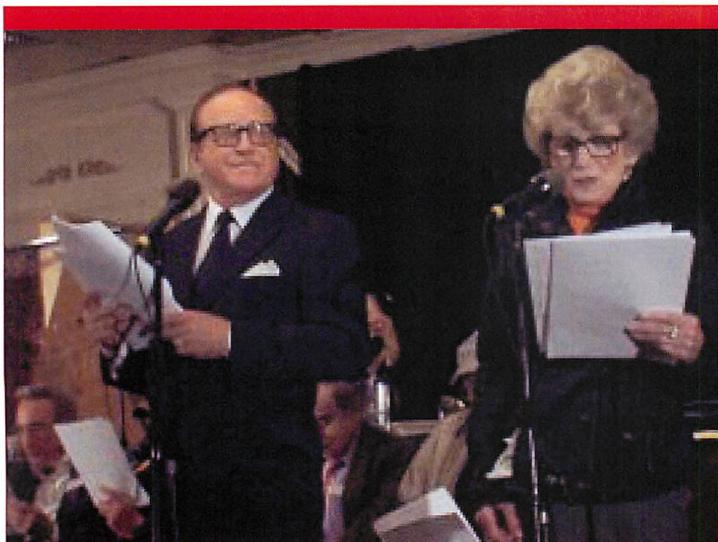
With such notable celebrities on hand, it seemed logical for a one-on-one with Chuck McCann and Bill Dana. Peter Fernandez directed an episode of *Suspense* titled “The Impostors,” which he wrote.

Susan and David Siegel discussed “Writing and Publishing OTR Books.” Ken Stockinger was supposed to present recordings of sportscasters, but at the last minute he changed the presentation to include an interview with legendary actor and sportscaster Gil Stratton, Jr., which received rave reviews. Gary Yogg offered “FDR in Wartime and Radio.” The Gotham Radio Players presented a lost episode of *Lights Out!* titled “Reunion.” The Singers and Big Band panel featured Mitch Murray and Molly Bee. Eddie Carroll impersonated Jack Benny so wonderfully on stage that the folks at the dinner tables believed they were hearing an original Jack Benny radio broadcast.

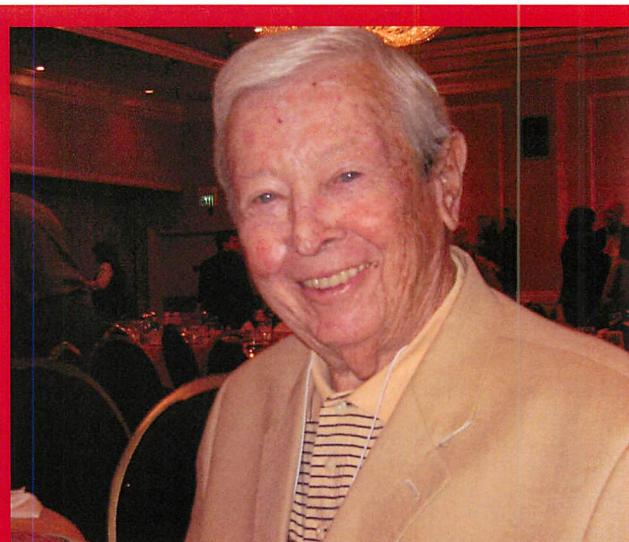
“After receiving an invitation to FOTR, Eddie Carroll called me to get background information on FOTR,” recalled Walden Hughes. “He had been to SPERDVAC in the past, and that summer he went to REPS and had a good time. Eddie included FOTR as part of his East Coast trip performing his one-man *Jack Benny* show. He did a one-nighter in Connecticut on Friday and flew over to Newark on Saturday. Eddie missed the first rehearsal, so Chuck McCann took over the role. Gloria McMillan thought he did a great job. When Dad and I stepped outside on Saturday afternoon, Eddie and Carolyn just arrived from the airport. After they checked in, we gave them the time of the second rehearsal and mentioned where they could have lunch. After the second rehearsal of the *Jack Benny* show, Shirley Mitchell and a small group of us went over to Kitty Kallen’s home. Kitty, Shirley and Dinah Shore were roommates in Hollywood in 1942. We were able to make the Saturday night show.

“I helped Frank Bresee produce the *Date with Judy* cast that weekend,” continued Walden. “We brought out many from the West Coast to do that show: Gloria McMillan and Stuffy Singer for the first time, and Gil Stratton and Barbara Fuller came back after being away for a few years from FOTR. Teri Keane, Chuck McCann, Bill Owens and Shirley Mitchell filled out the cast. So much happened that weekend I missed hosting most of the live broadcasts of the convention for YesterdayUSA. Fortunately, Michael and Leah Biel were able to take over completely without even having a warning. They have been co-hosting the broadcasts every year since.”

“Gary Yogg’s *Stagecoach* almost crashed on its first run, as this ‘John Ford’ and the rest of the cast were nearly laughed to death by three bad men,” recalled Craig Wichman. “Chuck McCann started the ball rolling with ribald mumblings about the silliness of the script and Duke Wayne; Jeff David chimed in with his dry rejoinders; and when Will Hutchins took to playing all the horses in the show, it was mayhem! All the while with dirty looks from such ladies in the company as Rosemary Rice and Jean Rouverol.”



EDDIE CARROLL & SHIRLEY MITCHELL



GIL STRATTON

(from AFTRA's 'Stand By NY' / Winter 2007)



Recreating Julius Caesar at the Friends of Old-Time Radio Convention are (l to r) Larry Conroy, Arthur Anderson, Simon Jones, Jeff David, Craig Wichman, and Cliff Carpenter.

FOTR AFTRA



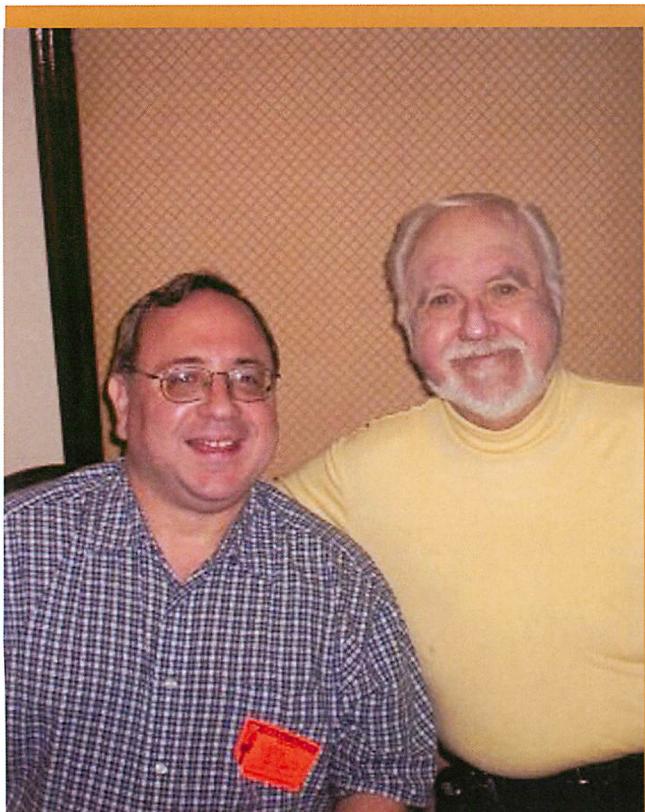
FOTR AFTER-DINNER PERFORMANCE

OCTOBER 23–26, 2008

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING: Mark Barkan, Ervin Drake, Harold Gould, Ilene Kristen, Laurence Luckinbill, Douglas McGrath, Arthur Anderson, Lucie Arnaz, Larry Conroy, Christina Britton Conroy, Tommy Cook, Peter Fernandez, Cliff Carpenter, Joe Franklin, Michael Gwynne, Elaine Hyman, Chuck McCann, Shirley Mitchell, Bill Owen, Rosemary Rice, Lynne Rogers, Jean Rouverol and Leslie Shreve.

Arthur Anderson directed an original radio script, "The Seven Hills of Passion" by Alan Gutierrez, which featured Cliff Carpenter, Jean Rouverol, Larry Conroy, Christina Britton Conroy, Lynne Rogers and Craig Wichman. Peter Fernandez directed an episode of *Suspense* which he wrote, "The Time, the Place, and the Death," with Arthur Anderson, Cliff Carpenter, Larry Conroy, Christina Britton Conroy, Leslie Shreve, Jean Rouverol and Craig Wichman. "It's always satisfying to give back to an organization that has given you much," remarked Craig. "I was pleased to entice voiceover legend Peter Fernandez into the FOTR fold in 2007, and he came back again the next year to direct another of his own excellent *Suspense* scripts. We've since lost Peter ... so here's to a good actor, a good writer, and that wisest of directors, one with a light hand on the tiller."

Jack French provided a look at radio coverage of the Lindbergh kidnapping. The *War of the Worlds* panic broadcast was covered again, this time with Anthony Tollin and Michael Biel. The Gotham Radio Players presented a lost episode from *The Adventures of Sam Spade* titled "Sam and the Corporation Murders." The Dave Warren Players then presented *The Aldrich Family*.



GREG ZEIGERSON & CHUCK McCANN



GREG ZEIGERSON & MR. AND MRS. EDWIN DRAKE



ARTHUR ANDERSON, SEAN DOUGHERTY & ALICE ANDERSON

OCTOBER 22-25, 2009

CELEBRITIES ATTENDING FOR THE FIRST TIME: Tracey Dey, Mary Owen (daughter of Donna Reed), Lillian Murphy and Billy Goldenberg.

This year's convention was devoted to "A Bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln and Edgar Allan Poe on Radio," hosted by Edgar Farr Russell III, with guest panelists Craig Wichman and Richard Sloan. After the Friday evening banquet, Russell directed a re-creation of "The Fall of the House of Usher" from *Escape*. Craig Wichman produced *Young Mr. Lincoln*, based on the John Ford film of the same name. "Saluting one of my patron saints by playing Mr. Lincoln on his 200th birthday was a touching moment," recalled Craig. "The audience response showed that he is still very much beloved. And I had the chance to see again (not long before he left us) one of the patron saints of OTR fandom, that lovable bear and rascally raconteur, Jim Harmon—who couldn't resist throwing me the old saw after our re-creation: *"Goodbye, Mr. Massey!"*

Gregg Oppenheimer also offered a 60th anniversary *Dragnet* comedy sketch with the talented Michael Gwynne, Richard Herd, Leslie Shreve and Elaine Hyman. Danny Curtis provided "The Road to Hope," a 1943 *Hollywood Canteen* radio broadcast with Rebecca Lerman, Michael Townsend Wright and Karen Luschar. Chuck McCann, who truly mastered Harold Peary's Gildersleeve laugh, played the title role of *The Great Gildersleeve* with radio veterans Shirley Mitchell and Gloria McMillan. Chuck McCann

participated in Gregg Oppenheimer's production of an *Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy* sketch. Ken Stockinger presented "Radio Was There," covering historic news events as they happened "live" on the air, which was written and edited by Neal Ellis.

"Chuck McCann dedicated words to the recent loss of Soupy Sales, raising up words of praise for Soupy," recalled Steven Hiss. "It was another example of what Steve Allen meant when he said, 'Radio people are simply nicer than most other people in show business.'"

Martin Grams offered a fascinating slide show about *The Green Hornet*, with the assistance of Terry Salomonson and a brief talk from historian Jim Harmon, author of *The Great Radio Heroes* (1967). This was Jim Harmon's final convention appearance, passing away a short time after.

OCTOBER 21-24, 2010

AMANDA OSBORNE'S ORIGINAL SCRIPT, "ONE AFTERNOON IN SECTION 37 (EBBETS FIELD, 1939)," KNOCKED IT OUT OF THE PARK AND GOT THE STADIUM ROARING! "We Bums had dem them from the minute Christina Britton Conroy warbled our National Anthem in a painful Brooklyn accent, and the genuinely funny script kept them chuckling to the last pitch," recalled Craig Wichman. "Jay Stern's direction did *The Columbia Workshop* proud. Several people said it was one of the best original script shows we've ever had here!"



KEVIN SCULLIN, LESLIE SHREVE & CRAIG WICHMAN

Proving the younger generation could handle themselves sufficiently on the stage, both Leah Biel and Martin Grams each offered a presentation about old-time radio. Leah discussed radio game and quiz shows, impressing even the candid know-it-alls who'd had their doubts. While it was early in the convention, one "Doubting Thomas" in the hallway admitted it was the best presentation he had seen at FOTR in years. Martin offered a slide show about *The Shadow* in a 90-minute time slot (twice the usual length of presentations) to a standing-room-only crowd.

Ken Stockinger and Neal Ellis offered radio coverage of the JFK Assassination. One attendee sitting in the front row stated that radio did not do nearly as good a job as television in covering all aspects of the assassination. After the presentation, he admitted that he'd been wrong—that radio did just as good a job, if not better, as television in covering facts of the assassination and all of the personal and emotional aspects of this national tragedy.

Chris Hunter, curator of Collections and Exhibitions at the Schenectady Museum, and Russ DeMuth of the G.E. Global Research Center, offered a fascinating Saturday morning presentation entitled, "Restoring the 1929-1930 WGY Pallophotophone Recordings." Gary Yogg offered a presentation about radio coverage of the death of FDR. Gregg Oppenheimer introduced a film titled "Aren't We Devils?" about Ralph Edwards, *Truth or Consequences* and *This is Your Life*.

On Friday morning, FOTR committee member and publisher author, Frazier Russell, continued the Poetry on Radio panel begun in 2008 by Dave Zwengler and himself. Frazier offered a personally crafted reminiscence and played an excerpt from the rare 35-year-old radio broadcast which changed his own literary life. After the presentation, OTR actor Cliff Carpenter told Frazier, "You gave us the world!"



MIKE BIEL & LEAH BIEL

SELECTED LIST OF CELEBRITIES WHO ATTENDED FOTR

ALAN ABEL
MASON ADAMS
LEE ALAN
LEE ALLMAN
ARTHUR ANDERSON
GEORGE ANSBRO
JOHN ARCHER
LUCIE ARNAZ
ERIC ARTHUR
IRA ASHLEY
BRAD ASHTON
PARLEY BAER
GEORGE BALZER
MARK BARKAN
HARRY BARTELL
DICK BEALS
BARNEY BECK
JACKSON BECK
MOLLY BEE
BOB BELL
JOAN BENNY
COURT BENSON
W. WATTS (BUCK) BIGGERS
FRANK BINGMAN
JOAN BISHOP
ED BLAINY
VIVIAN BLOCK
HENDRIK BOORAEM, JR.
ROGER BOWER
OSCAR BRAND
FRANK BRESEE
BILL BRITTON
DAVID BROWN
HIMAN BROWN
VANESSA BROWN
WARREN BRYAN

BOB BRUCE
ED BRYCE
JUDITH BUBLICK
DONALD BUKA
FRANK BUXTON
LILLIAN BUYEFF
WARD BYRON
JESS CAIN
TONY CAMINITA
FRAN CARLON
CLIFF CARPENTER
EDDIE CARROLL
DON CICCONE
LON CLARK
ROBERT CLARY
MILDRED CLINTON
ED CLUTE
NANCY COLEMAN
FRED COLLINS
PATRICK CONLON
CHRISTINA CONROY
LARRY CONROY
BEN COOPER
NORMAN CORWIN
HELEN COULE
STAATS COTSWORTH
PETER CRANFORD
PHYLLIS CREORE
ALEC CUMMING
BILL DANA
RICHARD DANA
JEFF DAVID
GWEN DAVIES
HUMPHREY DAVIS
CAROL DEIS
ALFRED DE LA FUENTE

VIVIAN DELLA CHIESA
JOSEPH DESANTIS
KENNY DELMAR
NAT DICKERSON
SAM DIGGS
BOB DIXON
PETER DONALD
TOM DOUGALL
NANCY DOUGLAS
ERVIN DRAKE
MARGARET DRAPER
BOB DREW
BOB DRYDEN
DICK DUDLEY
RUTH DUSKIN
HELENE DUMAS
SAM EDWARDS
ANNE ELSTNER
WIN ELLIOT
HERB ELLIS
ELSPETH ERIC
LOUISE ERICKSON
RAY ERLENBORN
LEE ERWIN
LEE FALK
BARRY FARBER
PETER FERNANDEZ
JOHN FIEDLER
LAURETTE FILLBRANDT
HARRY FLEETWOOD
JIM FLETCHER
LUCILLE FLETCHER
FRED FLOWERDAY
SONNY FOX
FRED FOY
JOE FRANKLIN

RUTH FRANKLIN
NOEL FREEDMAN
MICKEY FREEMAN
BARBARA FULLER
EARL GEORGE
WALTER GIBSON
JEAN GILLESPIE
GEORGE GOULD
HAROLD GOULD
MARTHA GREENHOUSE
BILL GRIFFIS
JACK GRIMES
BOB GUILBERT
MICHAEL GWYNNE
LARRY HAINES
ART HANNA
JEANNE HARRISON
JOHN HART
IRWIN HASEN
BOB HASTINGS
DON HASTINGS
CLAIRE HAZEL
BILL HENGSTEBECK
ED HERLIHY
BILL HERZ
MARY JANE HIGBY
HILDEGARDE
GLADYS HOLLAND
CELESTE HOLM
RUSSELL HORTON
PAT HOSLEY
JACK HOUSEKNECHT
DON HUGHES
WILL HUTCHINS
ELAINE HYMAN
FLORENCE JAMES
DORA JOHNSON
RAYMOND E. JOHNSON
SIMON JONES
EVIE JUSTER
JOSEPH KAHN
KITTY KALLEN
JOSEPH NATHAN KANE
BETTY TYLER KARP
JANE KEAN
TERI KEANE
JACKIE KELK
ED KEMMER
RAY KEMPER
ELAINE KENT
PEGGY KING
ERNEST KINOY
REX KOURY
MANDEL KRAMER
ILENE KRISTEN
MARIA LAMBARELLI
RUTH LAST
JIM LAWRENCE
EDDIE LAYTON
ROBERT E. LEE
GEORGE LEFFERTS
ABBY LEWIS
KAY LINAKER
BILL LIPTON
RITA LLOYD
ANN LORING
LAURENCE LUCKINBILL
PEG LYNCH
GILBERT MACK
DON MACLAUGHLIN
TED MALLIE
TED MALONE
JAMES MALONEY
BETTY MANDEVILLE
CHARLOTTE MANSON
AL MARKIM
AUDREY MARSH
SANFORD MARSHALL
IAN MARTIN
ROSS MARTINDALE
MAXINE MARX
LUCILE MASON
GRACE MATTHEWS
ROD MCBRIEN
CHUCK McCANN
JACK McCARTHY
MALACHY McCOURT
DOUGLAS McGrATH
GLORIA McMILLAN
TYLER McVEY
EDITH MEISER
BURGESS MEREDITH
JAY MEREDITH
JAN MERLIN
MARILYN MICHAELS
JAN MINER
SHIRLEY MITCHELL
DICK MONDA
JAMES MONKS
JOHN MOORE
ELIZABETH MORGAN
BRET MORRISON
CARLTON E. MORSE
ARNOLD MOSS
BOB MOTT
CHARLES MULLEN
MITCH MURRAY
JOHN NANOVIC
FRANK NELSON
JEANETTE NOLAN
HAMILTON O'HARA
PAUL O'KEEFE
GREGG OPPENHEIMER
CORINNE ORR
CHARLES OSGOOD
DICK OSGOOD
BILL OWEN
FRANK PAPP
LES PAUL
PATRICIA PEARDON
JACK PEARL
CYNTHIA PEPPER
ARTHUR PETERSON
GEORGE PETRIE
ELEANOR PHELPS
KATE PHILLIPS
BEATRICE PONS
BOB PRESCOTT, JR.
BOB PRESCOTT, SR.
PETE PRESCOTT
CARMEL QUINN
BOBBY RAMSEN
JOYCE RANDOLPH
JOHN RAYBURN
ELLIOTT REID
ALICE REINHEART
STELLA REYNOLDS
ERNEST RICCA
CLIVE RICE
ROSEMARY RICE
ROSA RIO
KEN ROBERTS
LARRY ROBINSON
WILLIAM N. ROBSON

LYNNE ROGERS	EZRA STONE	JEAN FRANCIS WEBB
RICK ROGERS	HAL (HARLAN) STONE	PEGGY WEBBER
ADELE RONSON	GIL STRATTON JR.	KARL WEBER
TERRY ROSS	FRANKIE THOMAS	FRED WEIHE
JEAN ROUVEROL	ARTHUR TRACY	LIZ WEISS
RUTH RUSSELL	LES TREMAYNE	RUBE WEISS
SOUPY SALES	SYBIL TRENT	DWIGHT WEIST
ANNE SARGENT	DICK VAN PATTEN	DAVID WHITEHOUSE
SARA SEEGAR	JOYCE VAN PATTEN	MARGARET WHITING
KEVIN SCULLIN	ELENA VERDUGO	CRAIG WICHMAN
JOAN SHEA	WHIT VERNON	IRENE WICKER
LESLIE SHREVE	CHUCK VERRAL	FLORENCE WILLIAMS
SIMON (STUFFY) SINGER	VICKI VOLA	RICHARD WILSON
SIDNEY SLON	FRANCES VON BERNHARDI	BETTY WINKLER
WARREN SOMERVILLE	VEOLA VONN	ERNIE WINSTANLEY
WILLIAM SPIER	BLAIR WALLISER	MIRIAM WOLFF
ARNOLD STANG	GEORGE WARD	CHARLES WOODS
LEE STANLEY	JANE (COLLEEN) WARD	BETTY Wragge
LEONARD STARR	GERTRUDE WARNER	Alice YOURMAN
BOB STEEL	NAN WARREN	JOHN ZACHERLE
MARGOT STEVENSON	WILLARD WATERMAN	BILL ZUCKERT

THE FLORENCE WILLIAMS AWARD WINNERS

1979	RAYMOND EDWARD JOHNSON & ROSA RIO	1994	BOB DRYDEN & ARTHUR TRACY
1980	BOB PRESCOTT, JR. & PETE PRESCOTT	1995	EARL GEORGE & BOB HASTINGS
1981	MIKE WARREN	1996	FRED FOY & ABBY LEWIS
1982	(NO AWARDS GIVEN)	1997	ROSEMARY RICE & BOB MOTT
1983	ARTHUR ANDERSON & FRAN STRIKER, JR.	1998	DICK BEALS & TED REID
1984	DON RICHARDSON & JACKSON BECK	1999	PAT HOSLEY
1985	KEN ROSS, TERRY ROSS, MRS. BRACE BEEMER & JAY HICKERSON	2000	WILL HUTCHINS
1986	MAX SCHMID	2001	RUTH LAST
1987	SIDNEY SLON & ANTHONY TOLLIN	2002	BILL OWEN
1988	BOB STEELE, EZRA STONE & SYBIL TRENT	2003	HAL STONE
1989	FLORENCE WILLIAMS, DWIGHT WEIST & JOE FRANKLIN	2004	LYNNE ROGERS
1990	MARGOT STEVENSON & GEORGE ANSBRO	2005	BEVERLY WASHBURN
1991	FRAN CARLON, BARNEY BECK & RAY ERLENBORN	2006	CLIFF CARPENTER
1992	KEN ROBERTS & PEG LYNCH	2007	CORINNE ORR
1993	LON CLARK & ADELE RONSON	2008	ELAINE HYMAN
		2009	CHUCK McCANN
		2010	CRAIG WICHMAN

CLOSING

BECAUSE THIS COMMEMORATIVE GUIDE WAS DESIGNED AND PRINTED WEEKS IN ADVANCE FOR DISTRIBUTION AT THE 36TH ANNUAL FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO CONVENTION, the details of the 2011 meeting, as well as the winners for the annual awards, are not being offered. Readers attending can add the names of the winners to the appropriate pages, should they want to retain a complete list for historical purposes.

“Looking back gives me joy and sadness,” remarked Jay Hickerson. “I am glad we started when we did, while so many radio stars were still alive. I am sad that most of them are now gone, but such is life. To keep the convention going, we began to include television and movie actors and young actors who enjoy keeping radio alive, among our guests.”

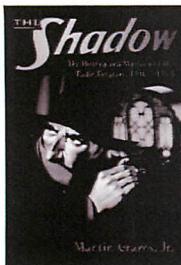
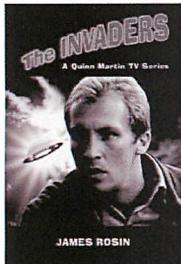
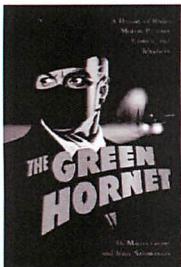
“My first acting job was on radio in 1935, on the NBC Red Network,” Arthur Anderson remembered. “The last I recall was in October 1954, when *Let’s Pretend* did its last Saturday CBS broadcast, to be replaced by football. In my acting career which has covered 74 years, radio has always been my love, and the Friends of Old Time Radio enabled me to continue my work on the microphone—both acting and directing.”

“I am very sorry to see FOTR pass into history, but it certainly has earned its great reward,” remarked Craig Wichman. “I promise to always remember the heartfelt sentiments of such dear people as Hal Stone, Arthur Anderson, Cliff Carpenter, and several others, that were always expressed in eerily similar words: *I’m just so glad that some of the next generation wants to keep this up after we’re gone.* We’ll do our damndest not to drop the torch, guys; you taught us well, and you and your medium deserve it. Thank you, Jay, and all of the stalwarts over the years who made FOTR happen.”

“In addition to the dedication of my committee, an integral part of our success is attributed to Louise Salerno, banquet manager of the hotel. Louise has been with us since 1982, our first year in Newark,” explained Jay. “Prior to that, our conventions were held at various hotels, including the Holiday Inn in Bridgeport, Connecticut, but because we were flying people in from the West Coast and sending limousines into Manhattan to pick up local stars, we needed a more convenient location. Another important component to our success has been the work of professional sound engineer, Bill Siudmak, who joined us in 1991. Bill and Louise should not be overlooked in the acknowledgements.”

“I enjoyed each and every guest that graced our convention events throughout the years,” said Jay. “The generosity of every one of them to give of their time and talent (without compensation, other than meals, hotel rooms and partial travel expenses), to a group of fans whose lives were touched by early radio, was overwhelming. I extend my gratitude to my committee, and all of you who have given of your time, talent and expertise. It will be an adjustment, and I will miss the conventions, but it is time for many of us to let go. I shall miss all of you who have shared your love of radio with me over the decades. Now, we will share our memories of 36 great FOTR convention years!”

EDITOR'S NOTE: SPECIAL THANKS TO VALERIE THOMPSON (DESIGN & LAYOUT), JACK FRENCH, GARY YOGGY, MICHAEL BIEL, KEN STOCKINGER, JAY HICKERSON, STEVEN HISS, MELANIE ALTMAN, KEN PILETIC (ALSO SUPPLIED PHOTOS), JANET CANTO GARI, WALDEN HUGHES, BRIAN GARI, RICHARD OLDAY, BILL NADEL, BARB & DAVE DAVIES, DAVID SIEGEL (WHO SUPPLIED A LOT OF PHOTOS IN THIS BROCHURE), CRAIG WICHMAN (ALSO SUPPLIED PHOTOS), KEVIN SCULLIN, EDGAR RUSSELL III, FRAZIER RUSSELL, MEL SIMONS, JOHN GASSMAN, LARRY GASSMAN, NEAL ELLIS, ALICE & ARTHUR ANDERSON, JOHN ECCLES, SEAN DOUGHERTY, STEVEN M. LEWIS, TERRY SALOMONSON, DON ASTON, LEE MUNSICK, ROSEMARIE DiCRISTO, BILL SMERCKANICZ, BOB BURCHETT, DEREK TAGE, MARY & DON RAMLOW, STEVEN THOMPSON, MAGGIE THOMPSON (PROOFREADING & COVER PHOTOS), JIM GAUTHIER (EARLY FOTR COVER PHOTOS), GREG ZEIGERSON, ALEX DAOUNDAKIS & MAX SCHMID.



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Congratulates "Mr. FOTR"
Jay Hickerson

"As a bullet seeks its target,"
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You have returned us
"to those thrilling days of yesteryear"
for 36 years.

"The Shadow knows" about crime
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"Thanks for the memories," Jay.
We will all miss you and wish you
the very best! God bless you.

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— MARTIN GRAMS



Arriving at the Friends of Old-Time Radio Convention every October and greeting all of the friends I made at FOTR was a highlight. I treasure those friendships. Thank you, Jay.

—Alice Anderson



**Jay—Thanks For
The Memories
And Enjoy The Future!**

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— Arthur Anderson

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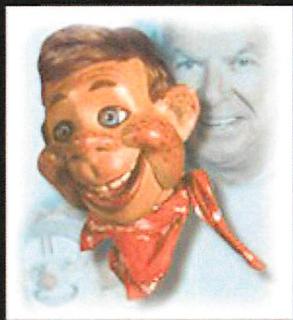
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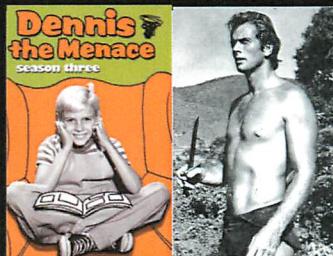
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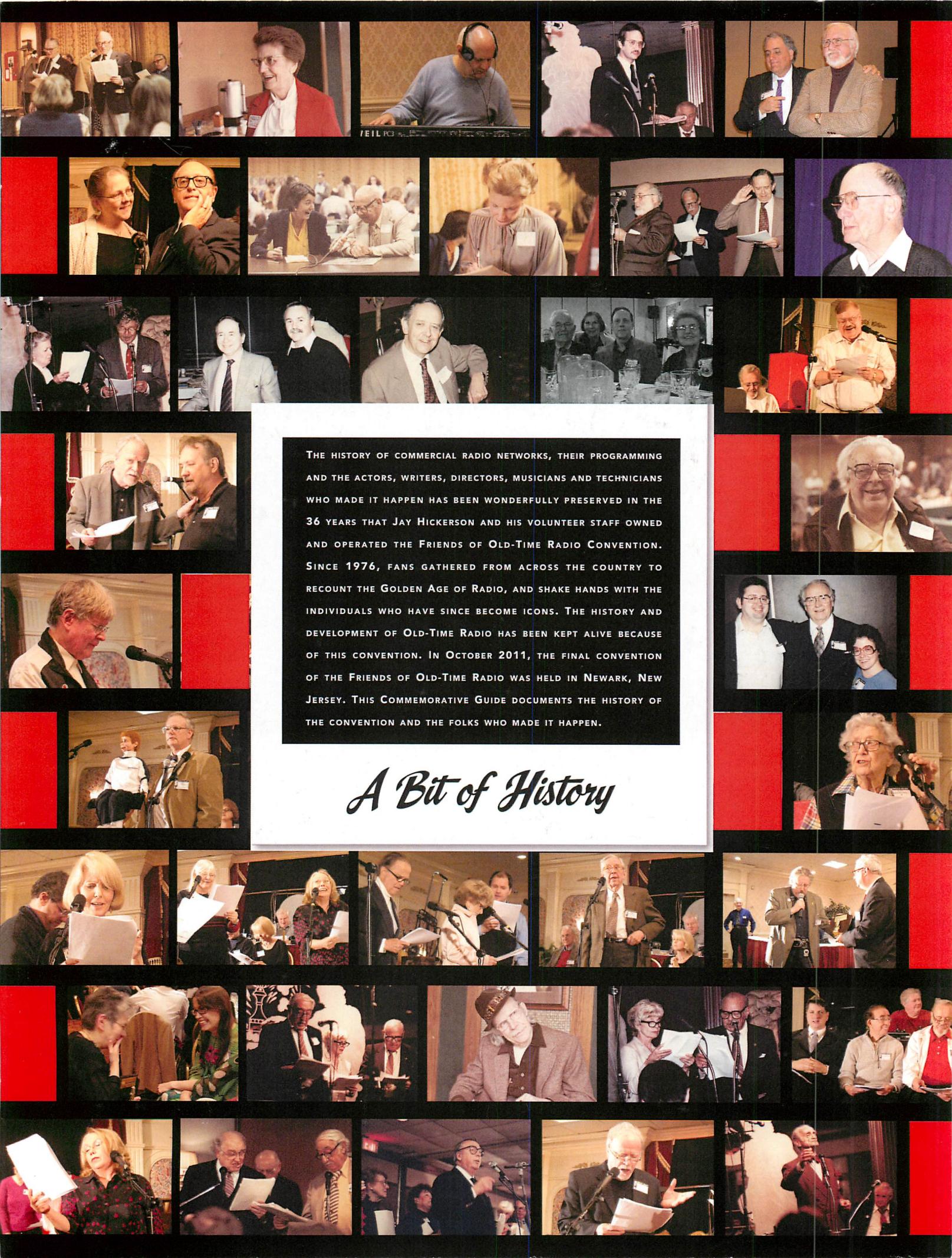
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THE HISTORY OF COMMERCIAL RADIO NETWORKS, THEIR PROGRAMMING AND THE ACTORS, WRITERS, DIRECTORS, MUSICIANS AND TECHNICIANS WHO MADE IT HAPPEN HAS BEEN WONDERFULLY PRESERVED IN THE 36 YEARS THAT JAY HICKERSON AND HIS VOLUNTEER STAFF OWNED AND OPERATED THE FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO CONVENTION. SINCE 1976, FANS GATHERED FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO RECOUNT THE GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO, AND SHAKE HANDS WITH THE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE SINCE BECOME ICONS. THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF OLD-TIME RADIO HAS BEEN KEPT ALIVE BECAUSE OF THIS CONVENTION. IN OCTOBER 2011, THE FINAL CONVENTION OF THE FRIENDS OF OLD-TIME RADIO WAS HELD IN NEWARK, NEW JERSEY. THIS COMMEMORATIVE GUIDE DOCUMENTS THE HISTORY OF THE CONVENTION AND THE FOLKS WHO MADE IT HAPPEN.

A Bit of History